

AN  
EARNEST  
INVITATION  
TO THE  
SACRAMENT  
OF THE  
LORD's Supper.

BY  
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*The Seventh Edition ; with Addition of Prayers, &c.*

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TO THE  
Right Reverend Father in God,  
**PETER,**  
Lord Bishop of  
**BATH and WELLS.**

My Lord,

**I** *Address the first Edition of this little Book to Your Lordship, when You were newly declared Bishop of this Diocess; and what I then writ was to congratulate Your Lordship, and to signify how happy I esteemed this Clergy and People, in such a relation. Your Lordship hath now govern'd several years among us, and fully answer'd the expectations of those that knew You, and the desires of those that*

## The Epistle

*did not, in the wisdom and justice of Your managements ; so that at this time Acknowledgments are more proper than Congratulations ; and particularly, we ought with humble thankfulness to own Your Lordships care and zeal for the great Interest of the Church, and Religion that I press in this Discourse, the success of which hath been very encouraging, and particularly in this place, where among about 1100 Communicable persons, Inhabitants of the Three Parishes within this City, I gave the Sacrament this last Easter to above 800 of them. I pray God to continue, and to increase this number ; through his grace and help I hope to give yet a better account of the regularity of this People.*

*I writ the Discourse for their use, and it had gone no further if I could have*

## Dedicatory.

have got Transcripts enough for them: In defect of such, I committed it to the Press, and understand since, that God hath blest these poor endeavours in divers other places with success, much beyond my Expectations.

I have oftenthought since of writing other little Manuals, concerning Hearing, Prayer, Meditation, and such like, chiefly for the needs of those of mine own Charge, with reference also to a more publick benefit; but my great and constant business of preaching twice a week, and attendance every day, and almost every hour of it, on the Church, or other services of his People, will not hitherto permit.

*These are Times in which our ut-*

A 3 *most*

## The Epistle

*most diligence is necessary, not only for the reducing the Mised on the one hand, but for the exciting the Cold, and Unconcern'd on the other: And 'tis hard to say from which the Church hath suffered more, either the mistakes of Zeal, or the want of it. We, Your Lordships Clergy of this Diocess, besides the other common considerations of Duty, and Spiritual rewards, have the Incentives of Your Lordships encouragement and example; and if we are remiss, our negligence will be inexcuseable, and our guilt will be aggravated by our privilege.*

*My Lord, I pray God give You further success in Your pious endeavours for the good of this poor, broken, and divided Church; and make all the Ministers of it, faithfull, and industri-*

## Dedictory.

*industrious in their great, and most  
honourable Calling; that we may  
gain the favour and approbation of  
God, and then 'tis no matter how  
we are treated, or thought of by  
perverse and sensual Men. So  
ever prayeth,*

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

Most faithful and

Most obedient Servant,

*Jos. Glanvill.*

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TO THE  
PEOPLE of my Charge.

*My dear Neighbours,*

**A**Lthough *We* of the publick Ministry cannot expect to do *much* by our persuasions and endeavours, in such an Age as this; Yet we ought to persevere in our work with Courage and Resolution, and not suffer our selves to be overborn by any Difficulties, or Discouragements whatsoever: For Duty belongs to us, but Events unto God, who will reward the Labourers whatever be the success of their Labours. And as every Minister of Religion ought to be active and resolved in the *Work* and *Patience* of the Gospel; so he shall then best acquit himself in it, when he studies the *proper needs* of the Age, and Place wherein he lives, and accordingly directs his endeavours to provide for them. Now there is

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nothing, that I know, that is wanted more in our Days, than a due sense of the Necessity and Advantages of the Holy *Sacrament* of the *Lord's Supper*, the general Neglect, not to say Contempt, of which, hath, I am perswaded, been a great and sad Occasion of the Debauchery and Divisions that are amongst us; and I verily think, that there could not be a more effectual means to reduce us to *Sobriety* and *Union*, than a frequent and reverend use of that divine Institution. From this persuasion I have earnestly, and often (as you can bear me witness) pressed this great Duty upon your Consciences, and affectionately recommended it to your Practice. I have represented its *Nature* with all possible *Plainness*, and urged its *Necessity* with a *Vigour* in some measure suitable to so great an Occasion; I have told you the *danger* of wilful neglect on the one hand, and the *benefits* of due performance, on the other; but notwithstanding all, there are too many of you, that seem yet insensible, and



and unconcerned. I have publickly desired those that are either *ignorant* or *dissatisfied*, to accept of my private help and instruction, and have offer'd them the utmost of my assistance for their better information and direction. And after all this, I know not what I can do more to serve you in this great interest of yours, except I put something into your hands that may be ever with you, and that you may consider on all occasions. *Publick Teachings*, by word of mouth, are too much looked upon as *customary Exercises*, and on that account they lose their force with *some*; and the greatest part even of the better Auditors cannot keep their minds so close and intent, to a Discourse *spoken*, as to receive it in its full evidence and power; or though the hearers are never so diligent and careful, our words are forgotten quickly, and the affections that they raise, vanish without any considerable effect upon their wills. For which reasons I have resolved upon this Course, to cast some of the plain things

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things I have preach'd concerning the *Holy Sacrament* into writing; That those who are unfit for that great duty by reason of *Ignorance*, may have the properest means of Instruction that I can provide for them always in their power, and when they please, before their eyes: And that those that *deprive* themselves of the Benefits of this most excellent Ordinance, by reason of the *Mistakes* of their erring understandings; may also have the most suitable help I can give, towards the setting their minds right, and the reconciling them to their Privilege, and their Duty.

For these purposes, I shall (as my manner is) represent what I have to say, in the most *distinct* and *easie* way I can contrive, avoiding all things that are *hard*, either in *notion* or *expression*; and strive, as near as is possible, to speak all along to the most ordinary understandings. For I look upon *plainness* as the best dress for Truth, and my great care and endeavour constantly is, to be *understood* by

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by *all*, as far as the subject will bear.

In the pursuit of what I intend, I mean, by Gods help to proceed in this order.

(1) I shall discourse with all convenient brevity, and plainness, the *Nature and Design* of the *Lords Supper*. And,

(2) Give the General *Reasons* to enforce the Duty; under which head, I shall apply my self to two sorts of Refusers, *viz* Those that neglect

(1) On the account of pure *carelessness*, and *stupidity*, and (2) Those that stand off upon the score of *mistakes* of *Conscience*.

In treating with the former, I shall shew that their obdurate refusal takes off all pretence they can have to Christianity, and puts them into the state of Infidels and Heathens; yea into a worse condition than *that* of *meer unbelievers*. As to the other sort, *viz*. The *dissatisfied* in *Conscience*, I shall consider their *Reasons against Communicating* according to the way of our Church, and shew that they are no *justifiable*.

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*justifiable Grounds*, why they should refuse to join with us in that solemn part of Christian worship.

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### CHAP. II.

**I** Begin with the *First*, The *Nature* of the *Lord's Supper*. Concerning *this*, there hath been an infinite diversity of Opinions and Disputes; the effects of which differences have been much *Noise*, and many *Tumults*, *Schisms* and *Wars*, with a vast heap of mischiefs and calamities to the Christian World: I shall not therefore trouble you with any thing of needless controverſie, or notion, on this argument; but ſtate it ſo far only, as it relates to *practice*; and I ſhall take all I have to ſay about it from the *Word of God*, the beſt Rule to guide us in the Enquiry. And if *diſputing* Men would have been content with *its* declarations in this matter, all the trouble and mischiefs had been avoided. But this  
hath

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hath been the misery ; some govern their thoughts of this Holy Institution by corrupt and *novel Traditions*, and others by meer vain and *arbitrary Fancies* ; Yea, Those who have been right in the main, have yet so mingled the plain truth with *Allusions*, and spoken of it in such a *phantastical*, and *uncertain* Way, that ordinary Understandings have been confounded, and those that are for down-right Sense; without the mixtures of Imagination, have not been able to tell what to make of *that*, which they heard described in such a fanciful and various Fashion. This particularly hath been my own case ; I had heard men preach so humourfomly, and so diversly about the *Sacrament* ; so much out of their *own* heads, and so little out of the *Oracles of God*, That I was quite bewildred and lost, and came at last to that pass, that I *knew nothing* at all of it, which Ignorance, and confusion of thoughts, was the natural effect of such discourses ; For when men once ramble in the way of *phrases*,  
*metaphors*,

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*metaphors*, and *conceits*, as they lose themselves, so they perfectly dazle and amaze those others whom they should instruct. I therefore betook my self to the *plain expressions* of *Scripture* concerning this matter; in *them* I found an easy account of the *nature* and *design* of this divine *Ordinance*. And whither shall we go to enquire after it, but to the words of *Institution* themselves? *These* I shall consider *first*, and then gather together those other passages of *Scripture*, which tend to the further explication of it.

1. The words of *Institution* are *Mat. 26.* [*Take, Eat, This is my Body.* v. 26. *And Drink ye all of it. For this is my Blood of the New Testament,* v. 27. 28.] To which is added in the *Gospel* of *St. Luke* [*Do this in Remembrance of me.*] *Luke 22. 19.* These words I shall severally explain, and then infer from them what is the *Nature* and *Design* of the holy *Appointment*.

Take, Eat, This is my Body —  
 And, This is my Blood — Here I  
 take notice, That Body and Blood  
 do

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do not relate to the *Bread and Wine*, but to the *Actions*, *Eat and Drink*, as appears plainly in the

\*Original. 'Tis not *this Bread*, and *this Wine*, are

\* Τὸτο, not  
ἐστίν.

my *Body and Blood*, but  
The *Sacramental eating and drinking* of it. In *this Christ's body and blood*, viz. His *Incarnation and Sufferings* are represented to us. And yet by a *Figure*, the consecrated *Elements* may be call'd his *body and blood* also; so the *Form* at the eating the *Paschal Supper* was, *This is the bread of affliction which our Fathers did eat in Egypt*; Not the very same, but a *Memorial* of it, and the *State of Bondage* from which they were delivered. Thus, 1 Cor. 10. 3, 4. *Manna* is called *spiritual bread*, and the *Rock* *spiritual drink*; and that *Rock, Christ*: Not that they could possibly be so in the *Letter*, but they signified that *spiritual food*, and were tokens of *Christ's Presence*. And thus the *Sacramental Bread and Wine* may be call'd his *Body and Blood*, that is, *Figures and Representations* of them; and that,

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that, not *barely* of his *Sufferings*, but  
 \* *Basil.* (as the \* *Father* notes) of  
 all the *Mysteries* of the In-  
 carnation which are *signified* and in-  
 cluded. Thus anciently the Elements  
 were call'd *Figures*, *Symbols*, *Images*,  
*sensible things* instead of *spiritual*, and  
 we know 'tis in common use to call  
 the *Picture* by the name of that it re-  
 presents, as *this is a Man*, and *that a*  
*Bird* or *Beast*. So that there is no  
 ground for the Doctrine of *Transub-*  
*stantiation* in these words, as the *Ro-*  
*man Church* pretends. But I wave dis-  
 putes, and come to the next expressi-  
 on to be consider'd.

[ *This is the New Testa-*  
 \* *Διαθήκη.* ment, or \* *Covenant* in my  
*Blood* ] viz. The *Sign*  
 and *Seal* of the *Covenant* made in his  
 Blood; a *Covenant* wherein *God* enga-  
 ged to bestow on us pardon of Sin,  
 and *Eternal Life*; and we promise *faith-*  
*ful* and *sincere* obedience: Thus in the  
 eldest times, *Eating*, and *Drinking*  
 were *Covenant Rites*: As we may see  
 in the compacts between *Isaac* and  
*Abime-*



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*Abimilech*, Gen. 26. 30. And between *Jacob* and *Laban*, Gen. 31. 44, 45. So that the Sacrament is not a *bare Sign*, but 'tis the *Seal* of Gods gracious *Covenant* made with us in his Son.

[Do this in Remembrance of Me.]

It hath always been usual to commemorate, and remember Benefactors and great Mercies by *Feasts* and *Festivals*. The Heathens

had their \* *Feasts* in memory of their *Heroes* ; And the

\* *As, αἰνέσεια*  
 & *αἰνῆσεια*.

*Passover*, a Type of *this* Supper, was appointed to preserve the memory of the *Israelites* deliverance out of *Egypt*, *Exod.* 12. 14. The *Lamb* was eaten with *bitter herbs*, to commemorate the *bitterness* of their servitude; the *Red Wine* was a Remembrance of their Blood which *Pharaoh* spilt; and the *unleavened bread*, to remember them, that they carried such out of *Egypt* at their departure: And thus our blessed Saviour hath appointed this *holy Rite* to imprint upon us the *memory* of what he hath *done* and *suffered* for us,  
 that

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that we might not forget our Deliverance by him from a bondage greater than *Egyptian*.

And now from *these* main passages thus explained, 'tis easie to inferr, That

The Sacrament of the Lords Supper is a Memorial Feast, appointed for a solemn Remembrance of Christ our Lord; and a Seal of the Covenant that God hath made with us in him.

Two things then it is principally designed for, (1) to *Remember* us of our Lord and Saviour, and (2) to be a *Seal* of the *Covenant* of Grace. Of each briefly.

(1) 'Tis for a Remembrance not *only* of his *Person*, or *only* of his *Sufferings*, or any other particular part of his Ministry; but we are by it required *thankfully* and *affectionately* to call to mind, *All* that he hath *done*, and *all* that he hath *suffered*; His *Life*, *Doctrine*, and *Laws*: His *Passion*, *Resurrection*, and *Ascension*; His *Victory* over *Sin*, *Death*, and *Hell*; and the *gracious Covenant* that God hath made  
with

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with us through him: *These* are all included in his *Body and Blood*, (as I intimated before) of which the Holy Sacrament is a *Sign*, and *Memorial*: And the remembrance of *these*, which we are called to by the *Divine Institution*, is not *only* some *slight* and *passing* thoughts, but a *solemn* and most *serious* fixing of them upon our minds, in order to the inflaming of our Affections with love, and our wills with resolution, that we may live answerably to that excellent Religion of the Holy Jesus which we profess.

(2) 'Tis the *Seal* of a *Covenant*, [*The New Testament in my Blood.*] The *Covenant* is, That God will give *pardon* of Sin, and *Eternal Life*; upon the conditions of *Faith* and *Repentance*. This *He seals* to us in the *Sacrament*, and assures us, that he, for *his* part, will make good *his Promises*; and we on *ours seal*, that we will endeavour to perform the *conditions*. So that the *Lords Supper* is a *Sacrament* by which we *confirm* those engagements we are entred into at *Baptism*. Then our *Sureties*

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ties undertook for us, that we should be faithful in the Covenant; and in *this* holy Ordinance we take all those obligations upon *our selves*, and in our *own* persons promise to act according to them.

This plainly, and in short, is the *Nature* and *Design* of the *Holy Sacrament*; concerning which there are some other expressions in Scripture, which I shall consider briefly, in order to the further Explication of the Sacred Mystery. The chief are *these*.

'Tis called (1) *The Cup of blessing*, 1 Cor. 10. 16. (2) *The Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ*, 1 Cor. 10. 16. And in the Duty 'tis said (3) *That we shew the Lord's Death*, 1 Cor. 11. 26.

(1) *The Cup of Blessing, viz. Of Praise and Thanksgiving*. Our Saviour *Mat. 26. Gave thanks* when he took the *Cup*. The Jews used to conclude their *Paschal* Supper with a Cup of Wine, at which time they sung an Hymn, and therefore called it the  
Cup

# to the Lord's Supper.

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*Cup of Praising and*  
\* *Blessing.* And the

Heathens also after  
their Feasts had

their \* *Cups of*  
*Praise* to their gods;

which some take to  
be the *Cup of Devils*

mention'd by the Apostle, 1 Cor. 10.

21. So that by this we are taught to

remember our Lord at his Table,

with *praise* and *grateful* acknowledg-

ments: And therefore the Ancients

from hence call'd the *Lord's Supper*, the

*Holy Eucharist*, namely, a *Feast* of

*Thanksgiving*, and the Solemnity was

always attended with an Hymn of

Praise.

( 2 ) Communion

( or \* Communication ) \* Κοινωνία.

of the Body and Blood

of Christ, viz. The *Sacrament* is a

*Sacred Rite*, in which God *communi-*

*cates* and imparts to all worthy Re-

ceivers, the *Benefits* of Christs *Incar-*

*nation* and *Sufferings*. He doth then

*ratifie*, *confirm*, and *solemnly* exhibit

them,

\* Ποτήριον  
ὑμνήσεως καὶ  
εὐλογίας.

\* Ἀγαθὴ  
δαίμων, ὁ  
δίδος σωτῆρ.

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them, to those that duly attend upon that Divine Appointment.

(3) [As often as ye eat ——— ye do shew the Lord's death] viz (1) Declare unto men, with joy and glorying, that we believe he *died* for *such* purposes, and that he hath procured inestimable *benefits* for us by his Death. That therefore we will adhere, and stick unto him; and that neither *death*, nor *life* shall separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. And (2) Imports our shewing and declaring *this* also unto God, and pleading it with him for his *pardon*, and his *grace*, for the sake of that meritorious Passion which we set forth, and commemorate. These passages fall under the account I have before given of the Ordinance, and shew *how* we are to Remember our Lord in it, and *what* we may expect in so doing.

Thus briefly of the *Nature* and *Design* of the Sacrament. I might have run the matter into a large Discourse, but I resolve on brevity. In what I have said, you will find all things that

are

are necessary and essential to the Ordinance ; For the *nicities* and *disputes* that are about it, you need not trouble your selves with them ; But so much of it as I have represented ( I mean in the substance of the particulars ) 'tis fit you should know : And therefore I intreat you, especially those of the more ordinary understandings, to return back and fix your thoughts a while upon those periods ; and read them over and over again, till you have a *clear* and *distinct* apprehension of the Subject they explain. I know the thoughts of most are very *confused*, and much in the *dark* about it, and while they are so, they cannot demean themselves as they ought in the performance of the Duty, nor receive those benefits that otherwise they might from it. I beseech you therefore not to content your selves with a *single*, and *running* reading ; Many Divine Truths will not enter into our minds at *first* sight ; or if they do, they are gone as soon as they are received : Though they are never so *plainly* expressed,

B

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prest, yet they many times *seem dark*, till we look again; or though they strike our Minds fully, yet they pass out of Memory, except we reflect, and think them over; I hope therefore you will do your selves this right; And I thus urge you to Consideration of my Accounts, not as if I fancied I had made any *discoveries* in them, which were not made before; (No, *These* are known things among the intelligent sort of Christians) But I do it, because I speak to the *meaner*, and *less improved* understandings. And perhaps from the Representation of the Affair which I have given, the *others* also may receive the advantage of a clearer order and method to their thoughts, and be delivered from many *unnecessary* and *uncertain notions* that they have imagined to be of great consequence to be believed and known, when either they are not *true*, or not *considerable*.

CHAR



## C H A P. III.

**I** Come now to the main thing I design, *viz.* (II) To *urge* this great Duty which I have thus explain'd, and to do what I can to perswade you to the conscientious practice of it. Now there are two things that commonly oblige men to action, namely, Considerations of *Duty*, and of *Interest*. And there are *both* here in the highest degree, to engage us. I shall discourse of each.

(1) We have the Motive, and Reason of *Duty*, and *Duty* in *such* Circumstances, as have the greatest Obligation in them. A *L O R D*, who hath all *right* to our obedience both by *nature*, and by *dear purchase*, hath *commanded* us to do *this*. And, A *S A V I O U R*, who hath rescued us from the Jaws of Hell and Death, and hath procured for us endless life and glory; hath *required* it of us. Here is the *Authority of just Power*, and the *Obliga-*

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tion of *astorishing Love*. We are bound by the *submissions* we owe a *Sovereign Lord*, and by the *gratitude* we owe an adorable *Benefactor*. The *Son of God*, the *King of both the Worlds*, the *Redeemer of Men*, 'tis *He* that *commands*, and his *Commandments* are not *grievous*; had he put upon our necks a yoke heavier than the *Jewish Ceremonies*, had he injoin'd a *greater* number of *costly* and *laborious* Rites than those, and required so many of such services from us, as would have taken up *all* our *time*, and imployed all our *strength*, and wearied *all* our *powers*; Yet these we ought to have observed without *repining*, and thought all but *small* homage to his *Greatness*, and *small* acknowledgment of his *Love*. *All these* had been *nothing* in compare with what he hath done for us *freely* without merit or obligation; *Nothing*, to his leaving the bosom of the Father, and the glories of the upper world, And the *Hallelujahs* of the blessed; *Nothing*, to his descending to a world of *Infamy* and *woe*; *Nothing*, to his suffering

suffering the scorns and contradictions of Sinners, the death of the Cross, and the wrath of God: So that we had been wretchedly ungrateful should we have stuck at any of *these*, or as much as *murmured* at them: But our Lord hath not given us any such trial of our Love, and obedience; He hath deliver'd the world from the Yoke of Ceremonial bondage; And (besides *Baptism*) hath appointed but *this one Rite* for us to observe; A *Rite*, that is neither *troublesom*, nor *costly*, *tedious*, nor *laborious*. And what Prodigies of baseness shall we make our selves, if we refuse to take notice of this his *gracious* Institution? With what face can we look up and call our selves by his name? How shamefully are we upbraided by the practice of *those* we count *barbarous*? Let us look abroad into the world and consider the most *brutish* *Idolators*: *They* will cut their beloved *flesh*, and burn their dearest children, and sometimes suffer themselves to be *crush'd to death* by the Carriages that bear their *Idols*, be-

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cause their *Infernal* Gods require, and are pleased with such testimonies of their homage: Hath the *Devil* such *obsequious* Servants? Are those *Cruel Rites*, which he appoints, observed with so much duty? Will those poor wretches do, and suffer any thing, rather than displease their *ugly Deities*? And are we *Christians*, Professed Servants of the *Son of God*, our *Sovereign* and *Redeemer*, and do we neglect *this* his *main, just, and gracious* Appointment? Is *this* too much to do for him? And do we owe him so much *less* than *Cannibals* do their *Idols*? Certainly those men of the *Desart*, those *wild Savages* of the Woods, shall rise up in *judgment* with such a *Generation* of pretending *Christians*, and shall condemn it. Methinks their *diligence* And *exactness* in those hard and painful services, should cover us with blushing and confusion, at our carelessness and neglect of the easie Duty our Lord requires from us: And we shall see great reason to be ashamed of our Omissions; if we consider,

That

That our blessed Redeemer had lived a life of *poverty* and *dishonour* for our sakes: He had instructed us in the Way of Happiness by his excellent *Doctrine* and *Precepts*, and had gone before us in an incomparable *Example*; And now he was just about to *complete* his *Love*, by *offering* himself unto *Death*, to deliver us from it, and thereby to give an Instance of the most amazing goodness that ever was: At *this time* he enjoins his Disciples to do something in *Remembrance* of him. And *Lord!* What is *sufficient* to be done in memory of such *Love*? Had he required the dearest of our blood, and the *choicest* of our *substance* to be offered to him in Acknowledgement, should we have thought *such* demands *unreasonable*? Would ordinary ingenuity have scrupled to make those Sacrifices for such Kindness? But he calls not for *these*, He looks for no *first-born* of our *Bodies*, nor *chief* of our *Flocks*; No, He appoints only a *Feast of Memorial*, and commands us to remember his *Love* in *that*: And

B. 4.

shall

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shall we not observe him in so *small a matter*? hath he not *deserved* to be remembered by us, or do we know any *better way*, to signify our Remembrance of him, than *that* which himself hath prescribed? Should we not do as much as *this*, at the request of an *ordinary* dying Friend? And is not the *greatest* and the *best* that ever Creatures had, worthy of such a *Testimony of Affection* from us? I am sure there is no one can be so brutish as to deny the *justness* of the *Duty*, and methinks none should be so unworthy as to refuse compliance with it. I beseech you therefore, if the *Considerations* of *Duty* can do any thing with you: If there be any *Obligation* in the *highest Authority*, if there be any *Allurement* in the *sweetest Love*; if your *profession* of *subjection* to *Christ* be not only a *Complement*, and if he have any *real interest* in your *Souls*, give this proof then of your *being in earnest*; *that* which you would be *thought*; refuse no more of his *Invitations*, neglect no more of his *Calls*; consider the *expressness* of his  
Com-

Command, and that *this* Law is peculiarly his: His in such a sence as (*Baptism* excepted) *no other Law is*. For his other Injunctions are but *Enforcements* of the Laws that God hath written in the *Old Scriptures*, and in our hearts; but this is his own proper Commandment; by obeying him in *this*, we particularly own him as our *Law-giver*, and by refusing we renounce him.

But if the *Considerations* of *Duty* should not prove so powerful with you, there are others which generally use to be of more force, namely, *those* taken from our *Interest*. And here,

(II) I desire you to consider the great *Benefits* that a worthy Communicant receives from the holy Sacrament. *This* is not a meer barren Ceremony, or unprofitable Rite, but an Instrument and Means to produce and to convey unspeakable blessings to us. Here we receive,

(1) *Confirmation* of our *Faith*: All habits are encreas'd by being exercised. And this Ordinance requires great ex-

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*ercises* of the Grace of Faith: For here we make a *solemn* Declaration of it, and thereby bind it stronger upon our Souls. And to the exercise of this *Divine Grace*, and the sincere and publick profession of it, there is no doubt but God will super-add his special aid and blessing, that out of *weakness* it may be *made strong*. So that if your Faith be *weak* and *trembling*, if you are perplex'd with vexations, doubts, and temptations to unbelief, apply yourselves to this holy Ordinance as to the proper remedy. *Declare* your Faith, and *pray* for more. If you *believe*, God will help your *unbelief*, Mark 9.25.

(2) Our *Repentance* will be heightened by our due Communicating at the Lords Table, and that in respect of all its great Acts, *viz.* 1. *Sense* and *sorrow* for Sin. 2. *Confession* of it; and 3. *Aversation* from it. For the first.

(1) The *evil* of Sin is never so well discerned as in its effects. It is *sweet* in the *mouth*, but *bitter* in the *belly*: And there is no greater evidence of its *vileness*



ness and malignity, than that we have in the sufferings of our Lord, which are set before us in the holy Sacrament. And certainly Sin must needs be an *accursed* thing (saith the considering Communicant) That the *blessed Jesus* must thus be made a *Curse* for it; that is doubtless a mighty evil, that cannot be expiated but by the Blood of God: And Sin, without question, hath unspeakable malignity in it, since it laid such a load of Wrath upon the Shoulders of Omnipotence, as made him complain, and sweat, and groan, and die. The good man hath never such a sense of the evil of sin, as when he is awakened by the *signs and images* of Christ's *Sufferings*, and when he sees it writ in *Characters of Blood*: Besides the *baseness* and *ingratitude* of Sin is made evident in all the Representations of the divine Love which we have at the Lords Table: We see *there*, that it is an abuse of the greatest and most tender Goodness, and there is nothing that more affects ingenuous Souls, than the Sense of such unworthiness,

## An Earnest Invitation

thiness, and this will beget the *liveliest* and most *kindly* sorrow. *They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn*, Zech. 12. 10. The *tenderest* grief ariseth from the apprehension of *abused Goodness*: And the more ingenuous Spirits are sooner brought to be troubled for their sins by a sense of *Mercy* than of *Terrors*. Now there is nothing that gives a truer or greater Representation of *Divine Grace* and *Kindness*, than the *Holy Sacrament*, and therefore *this* is a very effectual means to beget and increase a *penitential sense* and *sorrow* for sin. And upon this,

(2) Follows *Confession*, which is one Expression of *these*: The apprehension of an *angry Majesty* drives a Sinner to Desperation, and prevents his Confession. When the Lord askt the Man in the Gospel with some severity, *How camest thou hither, not having a wedding Garment?* He was *speechless*. Terrors beget stupifying Fear, which stops the mouth, and dams up all the passages to, and from the

the Soul, whereas the Discoveries of Goodness and Mercy open the heart, and melt the Seal upon the Lips: They invite Supplications, and beget Confessions, and therefore the *Sacrament*, which is a *Memorial* of the greatest, sweetest, and freest Mercy, tends in the nature of it to the producing humble Confessions and Acknowledgments: And it doth it likewise,

(3) As to the *Aversion* of *Repentance* by the same way. The top and perfection of *Repentance* is to turn from our *evil ways*; God invites his People to *this*, by the Argument that is most powerfully pressed upon us in the *Sacrament*, namely, *That of his pardoning mercy and kindness. Return thou backsliding Israel, — and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you, Jer. 3. 12.* His readiness to pardon is the great Motive to return, and the *Sacrament* is the *Seal* of the *Covenant* of *Pardon*. Despair of Mercy keeps Men on in a sinful course. *Thou saist there is no hope, say they in the Prophet, Jer. 2. 25.* They thought their case desperate,

## An Earnest Invitation

rate, and it follows, *I have loved strangers, and after them will I go.* The Devils persist irreclaimably in their hatred of God and Goodness, because the unalterable Sentence is past upon them: And if men come once to quit their Hopes of Happiness, they will also in a short time quit the thoughts of God and Virtue, and give themselves up to the Swing of their Appetites and Inclinations. Whereas on the other side, *Hope* is the great Encouragement and Spring of Endeavour, and where this is enlivened by a full and quick Sense of pardoning Goodness that Soul will feel a mighty Motive to reform and turn from Sin. Now the Sacrament is the Seal of that Covenant which assures us of Grace and Pardon and the firmest Ground of our best hopes, and most glorious Expectations. Thus the Grace of Repentance receives increase in all its Exercises from this Divine Institution: And so doth,

(3.) That other most excellent Grace, *Love*, both as it relates, 1. to

God

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3.

God, and 2. to our Neighbour.

(1) In the *Holy Sacrament* the *Mysteries of Divine Love* are unfolded in all their Circumstances of Wonder. There we see *pardoning*, *redeeming*, *bleeding*, *dying Love*: Love, suffering for all our sakes; and Love procuring all things for our Interests; Love descending to the *Grave* and *Hell*, and Love triumphing over both: Love leading *Captivity captive*, and obtaining *gifts for men*, Light, Life, and a glorious Immortality. Such Love, and Love beyond what we can say, and beyond what we can think, is represented at the *Holy Sacrament*, and this must needs fire every Soul that is not as cold as the Earth, and as dead as the Grave. Love begets love, and one Flame kindles another. And if we think of this Love, and consider it as we ought when we come to the entertainment of Love, this would excite our Affections, and turn our Souls into holy Flames, and so our *dead Powers* will *live*, and our dull sleepy affections will awake into new spirit and vigour:

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vigour: We shall live by Love, and act by Love till we are received into the earnest Embraces of Love, and swallowed up in that immense Ocean of Love. Now *Love* is the *best* and most *pleasing* of all our *passions*; and *Love* to God is the *best* and most *pleasant* of all *loves*: A *Love* free from those Tortures and Disquiets, that shame, and those griefs that are produced by absence and uncertainties, loss and guilt, when this Passion is placed upon other Objects. This Love is the Fountain of Delight, and the Spring of Action that sweetens our Troubles, and stirs up our Endeavours; that makes Duty agreeable, and Difficulties easie, that is a *present* Heaven, and the fore-taste of a *greater*. This also,

(2) Tends to the encreasing our Love one to another. It is a *Feast* of *Love* at our *Fathers House*, and our *Lord's Table*: The *Guests* are *Brethren*, and professing *Children of Love*. Here are all the Engagements to love set before us: The *Love* of our *Lord*,  
and

and his exprefs Commandment, *John* 13. 34. The *Relations* we ſtand in to God, and to one another. We cannot well chuſe but pity our *Brothers Infirmities*, and pardon each others faults, when we ſee how much God hath pitied our *Miſeries*, and how graciouſly he hath pardoned our *Offences*. Our Animofities will be abated, and our thoughts of Malice and Revenge will die. Our Indifferences will be kindneſs, and our kindneſs Love, when we conſider the inexpressible Love of our common Lord, and the bleſſed effects of that love: *Reconciliation* made, *Happineſs* procured, and *Sin*, and *Death*, and *Hell* conquered. A Senſe of theſe will ſwallow up all our little picks and diſpleaſures, and ſo fill us with the thoughts of *Gratitude* and *Love*, that we ſhall forget our *Enmities*, and embrace our Enemies, and ſhed abroad our kindneſs upon all about us, yea and extend it to all the World in prayers and good wiſhes. And now, this Spirit of *Charity* is a moſt divine temper, and a great happineſs: 'Tis a ſweet, ſerene,

## An Earnest Invitation

rene and pleasant thing, a Reward to it self, if there were no other: Whereas *Envy* and *Malice*, and all the degrees of them are an Hell, and Torment to the Soul; they are great sins and their own punishment: And a right use of the holy Sacrament will abate, and remove these, and therein also administer blessed and unspeakable Advantages to us.

(4) Our *Hopes* are nobly advanced and strengthened by this Ordinance: When the good man considers the *Justice* and *Holiness* of God, and the perfection of his Law; and then takes a view of his own *sinfulness*, and innumerable imperfections: His Spirits fail, and his Hope is giving up the Ghost; he sinks into Trouble, and almost into the Regions of Despair: Now all the Relief that a man can have in such a state, is to be drawn from Gods Covenant to pardon sin, and to accept of Faith and Repentance instead of Perfection. This is the Tenour of the Gospel, and the Foundation of our Hopes! and this Covenant is sealed and assured to us



at the *Sacrament*; so that thence the fainting Soul may derive life and quickning. And when the drooping Christian comes from seeing God, putting his Seal to his Pardon, and to the Promises made him of *Eternal Life*; his Hopes recover, and his Spirits return unto him, his Soul leaps for joy, and all his Powers are full of Content and Pleasure. And over and above this, God is pleased at such times especially to vouchsafe more abundant Manifestations of himself to the Soul, sealing his love upon it, and giving it so much assurance as may deliver it from its unreasonable doubts, and suspicions, And make it in part partaker of our Masters joy. But this will be a Particular by it self. Therefore,

(5) The *Holy Sacrament* is an excellent means to heighten a Christians Joy and Comfort. For there we are in a special exercise of our Graces, and by them are prepared for Divine Peace and pleasure: that peace of God, which passeth all Understanding, Phil. 4. 7. And this is something more than that content

tent that naturally ariseth upon, and  
 results from the Actions of Holiness  
 and Vertue, and is superadded by the  
 nearer Applications of the Spirit of  
 God to the Soul: This pleasure and  
 satisfaction God is always willing to  
 bestow upon us, but we by our sins in-  
 dispose our selves for it, and it is not  
 to be given out but to *prepared Souls*:  
 And now according to the *greater or*  
*less degrees* of our *preparations*, and exer-  
 cise of our *Graces*, we shall have *more*  
*or less* of this *spiritual joy* and *satisfac-*  
*tion* in our Communions. But besides  
 the joy which is *special* and *extraordina-*  
*ry*, the *Ordinance* in its own nature  
 tends to *delight* and *pleasure*. We had  
 rais'd Storms and Tempests by our  
 Sins, and provoked him whom we can  
 neither resist nor avoid: His Coun-  
 tenance was full of dread and terrors,  
 and Death and Hell stood ready for  
 the command to seize upon us: And  
 must it not needs fill those with joy and  
 transport, that were just now in this  
 dreadful state, when they shall see the  
 Heavens cleared, and the Storms gone,

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to behold smiles and love in the face of the offended Majesty ; to be assured that he is *reconciled*, and his Arms are open to receive us: That *Hell* and *Death* are destroyed, and *Life* and *Happiness* procured for us? All these are set before us in the Holy Sacrament, and did we use it as we ought, our Souls would be transported with joy, and we should have a delightful foretaste of the happiness and triumph of the Blessed, and all our Lives would be *Anthems of Praise* and *Acclamation* to the adorable Author and Procurer of our Blessings. And this,

(6) Is another happy advantage we derive, or may do, from the holy Sacrament, viz. That it heightens and spirits our *Gratitude* and *Praises*. Praise and acknowledgments of *Divine Favours*, are all the Return we can make for them ; and we are to offer up these Sacrifices for our selves, and all the other Creatures. But the *Commonness* of our Mercies takes away the *sense* of them, and we pass them over with *slight* and *customary* acknowledgments :

ments: This ordinarily is our course and 'tis a very disingenuous and ungrateful carriage to the bountiful Author of our Beings and Blessings. But now at the Holy Sacrament, *Divine Favours* are particularly and solemnly represented, our remembrance awakened, and our affections excited and the devout Soul pours it self forth into holy Eucharist, and Thanksgiving, *The Heart is full*, and *the Mouth flows*; all the *Powers rejoice* and in rejoicing break forth into *Songs of Praise*: And so begins the *blessed Employment*, which shall be the *Work and Happiness of Heaven*.

Thus we shall receive *Increase* of our *Graces* and our *Comforts*, from the frequent and due use of the *Holy Sacrament*, and all other *Spiritual Advantages* are contained under this. And as by *these particulars* we may encourage our selves to our duty, so by *them likewise* we may see how we are to *demean* our selves in the discharge of it: *What acts* we are to exercise, and by *what considerations* we may stir

our *Graces*, inflame our *Affections*, and strengthen our *Resolutions*.

And now the *Benefits* that I have represented to encourage and invite you to the *holy Sacrament*, do not only concern the *thorow* and *grown Christian*, but even *all* that own the Profession of Christ's Religion, and have not renounced their *Baptismal Engagements* by *lewdness* and *impiety*: For such have *some degrees of Faith, Love, Repentance, and other Virtues*: But the unhappiness is, that *these*, in the most, are very low, imperfect, and in a degree that will not secure their condition: *These Graces* must be advanced to *nobler measures*, and to *such degrees*, as may prevail over the *contrary habits and dispositions*: Till the matter comes to this, we are under the *Law*, and a spirit of bondage; in a condition of *impotency and weakness*, and not arrived to the glorious *Liberty and Power of the Sons of God*. This, all that profess the *Christian Faith and Hopes*, ought to aim at, and endeavour after; and the *Sacrament* is the most proper and likely means for

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for the advancing of our *imperfect* *graces* to that noble height. So all that professing Christians are concerned in the Duty, and capable of the Benefits. And to all those that have *such* thoughts, and *such* desires, the Considerations I have presented will be of moment. But for the rest that are *careless*, and *unconcerned*, dead to *such* *spiritual* Motives, and *stupidly* *careless* of the *duty* and the *privileges* that attend it, they are not *Christians*, but do as much as in them lies, to renounce their Religion, and to put themselves into the condition of Heathens and professed Infidels. This is that I come next to discourse.

## C H A P. IV.

**A**FTER all my perswasions, and more earnest Endeavours, have too much cause to think, that some among you neglect the holy Ordinance, not for any *reason* that they have

have, or can as much as pretend, but from meer brutish stupidity and unconcernment. They care not for these things: The Motives of Religion and another World can do nothing with them; such considerations are not felt, but past over their Souls without making any impressions on them. And now, as for such, I am come to shew, That they disclaim Christ and his Religion, and are by no means to be reckoned into the number of Christians. This I prove by the following Particulars.

First, They renounce a main Article of the Creed, viz. *The Communion of Saints*, their Communion with (1) Christ, and their Communion with (2) one another.

(1) Christ invites us to his Table, and provides a spiritual entertainment for us; and in that there is a solemn and special intercourse between him and his Church, which on our part consists in the exercise of our Graces; and on his, in the Benefits and Blessings he bestows. He invites us to come and to

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meet

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meet him *there*, to enjoy *spiritual Correspondence* and *Communion* with him. And now, wilfully to refuse the Invitation, is to signify our *contempt* of the *Holy Jesus*, and so declare that we care not for any nearness of correspondence with him. And such Neglecters in effect say, that they love the converse and communion of their vain and vicious company: That they can spend their time pleasantly in their conversation upon an Ale-bench, or place of Idleness, or Debauchery: But for *Christ Jesus* they like not his company, and care not for any intimacy or acquaintance with him. This is the direct language of such practices, and neglects; and what kind of *Christians* are such as these?

(2) They renounce the *Communion of Saints one among another*. The holy *Sacrament* is the *Feast of Charity* and *Christian Love*, and there our Affections are united to God, and to our Brethren. There we profess to be *one Body, one Society*, and to be all *Members one of another*. So that those who

neglect



neglect and refuse this holy *Symbol of Love*, break off from the *Society of Christians*, and declare they will have nothing to do with them, as far as they are concerned in that Name and Relation: That they will not be of the flock and Number that Christ calls *His*; but would rather have their lot with the World, and Herd of Mankind, who are Strangers to the *Covenant of Promise*, without hope, and without God in the world, Ephes. 2. 12. That they value not *their Privileges*, nor care for their *hopes*. This is the meaning of their neglect, and such Christians are the wilful Refusers.

(2) They renounce their *Baptism*. This is the Sacrament of *Entrance* into *Christianity*, and here *Engagements* are laid upon us without our knowledge or consent. At the Sacrament of the Lords Supper we solemnly engage and take those *Obligations* upon our selves. If we refuse to do *this*, we withdraw our consent from what was done in our stead; we make our *Baptism* void, and put our selves into the state of *Infidels*

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and *Heathens*. The *Indians* were by the *Spaniards* driven to *Baptism* in droves like Cattel to the water, without knowing what it meant, or what they did in it: Were these *Christians* by Virtue of such a Baptism? Especially, is there any reason to think *those* of them such, who as soon as they were free, made open declarations against it. And are *those* among us *Christians*, who were *signed* with that *Religion* when they could not *help* it? and profess against it by their *Actions* and *Neglects*, as soon as they are in *capacity* to do it? who *disown* it when they are *solemnly* called to put their *Seal*, and to declare their *Allowance* and *Approbation*! Their *Sureties* engaged for them, that they should *believe* the *Christian Faith*, *keep* Gods *Commandments*, and *renounce* the *World*, the *Flesh*, and the *Devil*: But say *those* by their practice, what had they to do to undertake such things for us? we will stand to no such Engagements: We are call'd on to make this good our selves in Person at the other Sacrament,

ment,

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ment, or by our neglects to declare it void: But we will not ty our selves, or own any such engagements upon us: we will leave our selves at large to believe what we please, and to practise what we fancy, and to gratify and worship as long as we think fit, the World, the Devil, and the Flesh, our Friends and dearest Correspondents. All this likewise is plainly signified in the neglect of the Holy Sacrament; and therefore certainly such are no better Christians than the wild men of *America*: Which will further appear, if we consider,

(3) That by it they deny the very profession of *Christ Jesus*; They will not so much as claim nor pretend to him, in any *solemn significant* way. To say that we are *Christians*, and now and then to hear a *Sermon*, these are not profession enough: They are but cold declarations of our *Opinion*, no good significations of our *Faith*. The right profession of *Christianity* is made, by our presenting our selves at the Lords Table, and owning our *Faith* there,

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that is a solemn and publick confession and acknowledgment. To hear Sermons is too often but curiosity or custom, to say we are of the Christian Religion, is but a declaring in what way we have been brought up; and meer *Education Faith* is but a faint un-signifying thing; it is but Opinion, and a low degree of assent. 'Tis true, a man may be a *Formalist* and an *Hypocrite* when he comes to the Lords Table, as well as in other lower significations of his Religion. But however he makes a *profession*, and *that* which is *proper* and *solemn*: Whereas the *wilfully negligent*, refuse to make any due confession of Christ and his Religion: *They openly deny him before men, and such he will deny before his Father which is in Heaven*, Matth. 10. 33. To withdraw from the *Profession* of *Christianity* in times of *difficulty* and *persecution* is a great sin; but 'tis such a one as admits of some *extenuation* from the *frailty* of *humane nature*, and the *temptations* of *fear* and *self-love*: But to *deny* the *profession* of *Christ* in times  
of

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of *Liberty* and *encouragement*, this is an *affront* to the *Holy Jesus*, for which there is no *shadow* of *excuse*, and must arise from *contempt*, and a *confest neglect* of him. Such persons publish to the world, that they own *nothing* of *Religion*, but count it a *disparagement* to be thought any way concern'd for it. And so are by no means to be accounted *Christians*. Further,

(4) Their refusal and neglect is a quitting and renouncing the *whole Covenant* that God hath made with *Sinners* in his *Son*. *The Covenant on Gods part* offers *Grace* and *Glory*, and on *ours*, it binds to *Faith* and *sincere Obedience*. We are called to the *Sacrament* to see God *confirming* what he hath promised, and assuring us to make good what concerns *him*: On the other side, we are to present our selves *there*, to profess our readiness and resolution, to perform *our part*, to keep the terms to which we were engaged, and upon which we expect the promised Blessings. Now if we wilfully refuse this *Confirmation*, we with-  
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draw our selves from the *Covenant*, and declare that Grace and Glory, are things that we neither *care for*, nor expect; and that we will not tie our selves to any *Faith* or *Homage*; but would be as free as we can to follow the *Devil* and our *Lusts*; and so are very far from being *Christians*.

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### CHAP. V.

**I** Have thus briefly shewn you what is *signified* and *implied* in the neglect of the *Holy Sacrament*. Many of you that are guilty of this sin, would I suppose be loth *openly*, and in *words*, to *renounce* Christ and his Religion; and yet while you continue in this obstinate, dangerous neglect, you *do it* as *fully* as if your Tongues declared against that Name and Profession. And I think when any such as *these* turn *Papists*, *Turks*, or *Jews*, they do but change to some *shew* of Religion, from none at all. So that it is no *real* disparagement,

ragement, or loss to our Church, when those Infidels declare in *words*, what before they sufficiently signified by their *practice*. *They go out from us, because they were never of us*, 1 John 2. 19. They do not *change* their Religion, for they had never any before which they might exchange.

This, Sirs, in serious truth, is, the condition of those that wilfully refuse and neglect the Duty of *Holy Communion*: And methinks it should make such tremble to consider, that they live in a *protest* and *impudent* contempt of God. You pity *Heathens* and ignorant *Americans*; but there is work enough for your pity at home, and their condition certainly is not worse than the condition of those careless negligent Sinners among our selves. Yea, the Apostle tells us, *That 'tis better never to have known the way of truth, than after we have known it to turn away from the Holy Commandment*, 2 Pet 2. 21. And our Saviour saith, *It shall be more tolerable for the dark Tyre and Sidon at judgment, than for the enlightened* C 5 Capar-

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Capernaum and Bethsaida, *Matth.* 11. 22. We think their condition dreadful that say, *there is no God*, and no doubt it is *so*: And certainly *their* state is not *less* deplorable, That acknowledge *there is a God*, but *defy* him, and carry the matter *so*, as if in good earnest, there were *no such Being*. To live at large without the serious profession of *some Religion* is *brutish* and *unnatural*: And such *Savages* deserve not to continue in the societies of *men*, but are fitter to range among the wild Beasts of the Woods: *Such* are those among us, that never make any solemn profession of *any Religion*, by *any act* of their *own*: They have *no Religion*, but that of their *Climate*, which they neither understand nor mind: They are *Christians* by the *Christianity* of others; (*viz.* the *general Profession* of their *Countrey*) or they are none at all; and if they live and die in this condition, *wild men* and *Cannibals* will at the last be in a better state than they.

And now, *Sirs*, Reason for this carelessnes and dangerous neglect, I am sure  
you



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you have none ; nor do the sort I am now dealing with, pretend *Scruples of Conscience* : But some *Excuses* there are, (which you know are but *vain*) that you use upon occasion, to take off the edge of reproof, and to seem justified in the sight of men.

Thus they that were invited to the Supper in the Parable, Luke 14. 18. made *Excuses* ; One had *bought Ground*, and he must see it ; a second had *bought Oxen*, and he must try them ; and a third had *married a Wife*, and could not come. None of these pretences had any good reason in them ; they were *something* to say, and had a little colour, but they were not the *Causes* of their not coming to the Supper : No, the *true ground* was their *contempt* of the Master, and his *Invitation* : And therefore *Matth. 22. 3.* 'Tis said, *They would not come* ; Their *excuses* were looked on as *flat denials*, and the Reason is given after : It was not their *Ground*, nor their *Oxen*, nor their *Marriage* ; but their *disesteem* of the Lord, and his Feast, *They made light of it.* *vers. 5.*

But

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But though these excuses were not good, yet they had something *specious* in them: 'Twas *business*, and *considerable* occasions that were alledg'd: And *such* Affairs they *really* had; for 'tis said in *St. Matthew*, that *they went their way*, one to his *Farm*, and another to his *Merchandise*; so that there was something *true* in their *Pleas*, though the *main thing* for which they were brought, was *false*. But now, if they had sent word, that the *Lords House* was so far off, that they were not *able* to go to it, though really it were within some few *Furlongs* of their remotest dwellings, and no further than the *Market*, which they constantly frequented; there had been more *folly* in this excuse. If they had said, that there was not *room* for them all in the *Lords House*, when they knew, that it was never *full* on *such* occasions, and that a great part of those that were invited would not come, so that they were sure to find too many empty places; the excuse would have been interpreted as a *Mockery*, and a *scoff* at the invitation. If they had told the *Messengers*, that  
they

they would not come, except they had each of them a *Chair* and *Cushion* provided for him, and might sit in *state* and *ease* at the Entertainment, this had been *greater* arrogance than appears in those Refusers. If they had sent the Lord word, that they would not feast with him at *such* or *such* of his Houses, that were *appointed*, and were most *convenient* for their reception; but they would have it *here* or *there*; at *home*, and *next* door; in places much less fit. *This* would have been a very *humour*some and very *rude* Answer to the Invitation. If further they had said, that the Feast began too soon, and that they could not *rise* so *early*, though the Sun was up many hours before, and they were abroad *every day* *earlier* about their other *Business*; this also had been an *Affront* to the *Master*, and a *contempt* of his *kindness*. But if these *surly unworthy* people should have been *humour'd* in *all particulars*, and things should have been *so* managed, as to have avoided all these *pretences*: And yet if after such *condescensions* they should have refused, they

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they had *confuted themselves*, and given the *Lye* to their *Excuses*. But, if notwithstanding all this they should have cryed out that they were *perishing* for want of *Bread*, and clamour'd and complain'd heavily, th t Provision was not made for them: What could have been said to such an *impudent brazen'd* sort of *Hypocrites*?

Sirs, There are some among you that understand what I mean: I speak not thus out of *ill will* to upbraid any of you, but I ought to *mind* you, and to endeavour to *convince* you of your sins. Whatever *colours* t e *guilty* may set upon their neglects and contempts of Holy Ordinances before men, God will not be deceived or mocked; there is no putting Tricks upon him. If you will not be perswaded to your Duty, he knows the *reason*, and 'tis in vain to make *false flourishes* and *excuses*. Yea, some mens *pretences* are so openly untrue, and gross, that they cannot as much as hope to *deceive men* by them. Every one sees the *falsehood* and *lying* of their *Allegations*, all their *Actions*

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proclaim that they do not themselves believe or mean any thing that they say, and yet they have the prodigious impudence to lye on in the face of God, and Conscience, and Men. So seared and hardened are some in their perverseness and hypocrisy, and act at that rate, as if it were a Play-game, and sport of wit to shew how many ways they had to evade their Duty, with some shew of Reason. Sirs, When this vile sort of evil men have the Forehead to pretend Religion, they become the most mischievous Miscreants upon earth; and the fittest Instruments that Satan can desire or use for the Affairs of his Kingdom. But no more of them now.

Friends, I am exceeding troubled to see how undutiful to God, and how unkind to themselves, how foolish and unreasonable many men are, when they seek for little occasions to pretend, as reasons against the greatest and most important Duties; when that which would excuse nothing else, shall excuse them unto God for a neglect of his  
Worship,

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*Worship, in the greatest Instances of it: An aking Finger, a few Drops of Rain, the cold Air, a Fit of Drowziness, an impertinent Visit, or such like Trifles, are enough to be pleaded for absence from the House of God, and Holy Communion with him. My Wife was not at home, or she was busie, my Childs head aked, or I had Friends to Dine with me, therefore I could not be at the Sacrament. Therefore I could not! For shame, false man! offer such excuses to thy Master, or thy Prince, when he commands and expects thine attendance; see how he will take them from thee: Yea, offer such but to thine Equal, that waits for thee on Affairs of Moment, and try how kindly he will receive the disappointment on such grounds. Dost thou use to say, I could not go out to Market to buy Necessaries, because 'twas cold Weather, I could not go to Dinner to my kind Neighbour next door, that invied me, because I had prick'd my Finger? Are such pretences too trifling to be used on such ordinary occasions, and are they enough for*  
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the *Greatest*? will they serve to excuse thy neglect, of *feeding* thy Soul with the *bread* of *Life*, and thy making *Provision* for *Eternity*? Will they answer for thy not waiting on the Lord, the Lord of Life and Glory, when he invited thee to the Feast of Love at the House of Banquets? What thoughts hast thou of the *Privileges* of the *Gospel*, the *Communion* of *Saints*, the peace of *Conscience*, the joys of the *Holy Ghost*, the *fore-tasts* of *Glory*; what, I say, dost thou think of *these*, if they have not so much power with thee as the most acknowledged trifles? With how much less respect and devotion dost thou serve God, than wicked men do the Devil and their *Lusts*? When they invite to jolly meetings and communion in debauchery and bestial madness, do the *Blades* use to make such excuses? Are they diverted and kept off from their brutish satisfaction by such *Nothings*? Certainly they could not so excuse themselves to their *Lusts* and vile Companions. And do you pretend to be *Worshippers* of the God of Heaven, and *Worshippers* of the  
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## An Earnest Invitation

best and purest sort, to be *Christians*, and *Expectants* of Eternal Glories as *Rewards* of your *Services*: And do you thus serve your Maker, *now* and *then* when the *humour* takes you, when the *Devil* hath no *business* for you, and you have nothing else to do? Are you not ashamed to confess that *Religion* hath so little power with you, and that every thing can do no more with you, than your *Duty* to God, and the *Interest* of your Souls? Do you thus work out your *salvation*? Do you thus seek a *Kingdom*, an *Heavenly Kingdom*, an *Everlasting Kingdom*? Is this the work and patience of the Gospel? Is this running and striving, and fighting and giving diligence? Is this cutting off right hands, and plucking out right eyes? Is this forsaking all, and following Christ? If there be any reason, if there be any shame, if there be any Conscience, if there be any sense of God and Religion in you, let not small matters keep you from this your greatest Duty and Concern. Make no more such vain and self condemning Apologies. I know not whe-  
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ther it were not better for you once for all, to say you are *no Christians*, than to insist on such *shameless* pretensions for your neglects of Christ and his Appointments. I add no more on this Head now; I pray God you may lay to heart what I have said.

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## CHAP. VI.

**I** Must now discourse with the other sort of *Refusers*, viz.

(2) *Those* that stand off upon the score of *mistakes of Conscience*. In applying my self to them, I shall consider the most weighty *Objections* that carry any colour of *Conscience* with them. And though I know many pretend scruples of this sort, when in earnest they are not the reasons of their neglects; yet because they are so to some, I shall take them to account. They are of two sorts:

(1) Such as hinder men only *sometimes* and in *part*.

(2) Such

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(2) Such as wholly obstruct their *Communion*; and are pretended on grounds, why they cannot partake with us at *any* time.

Of the first kind are *these* that follow; *viz.*

[ *I would not have neglected the Holy Sacrament, but I was not in Charity; such, or such a Person hath abused me, and I was at odds with him; so that I durst not come.* ]

To this I say, That in such an Occasion, thou art *seriously* and *impartially* to consider, whether thy displeasure were *just* or *unjust*, upon the determining of *this* will depend the state of the Case. If,

(1) Thy displeasure were *just*, and thy Neighbour hath done thee *wrong* and *persists* in it without *repentance* or *reparation*; 'tis no *uncharitableness* to be displeased or to think amiss of him. In such a case thy *anger* is no *sin*, so long as it keeps it self within *just* bounds. Be angry, and *sin* not, saith the Apostle *Ephes. 4. 26.* They may be parted. And what is no *sin* cannot *unfit* us for the

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*Holy Communion.* For that *Ordinance* doth not oblige us to be reconciled in our thoughts to *wicked* and *injurions* men, while they *impenitently* continue *such*: It will indeed require us not to *revenge* our selves on them to do them *wrong*, or to desire their *ruine*, or as much as *hurt*: but not to have *kind* and *good* thoughts of them while they continue *obstinate* in their *sins* and *injustice*: Otherwise it were in the power of every wicked person to *hinder* the good man from the *Sacrament* when he pleased. On such an occasion (I say) we may be *innocently angry*, and not only *pity* the *injurions* man, which many times is but a *proud*, though more *plausible* word to disguise our anger. And the Person that is but *thus justly* pleased with an Offender against God and himself, is not indisposed for the *Sacrament* thereby. If this be your case any time, you ought not to permit the injury of another to do you so *much more*, as to keep you from your Attendance on Christ at his *Feast of Love*.

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But

## An Earnest Invitation

But (2) If upon *examination* you have found, that your *anger* and *displeasure* was unjust, then the *sin* and the *wrong* was on your part, and you ought to repent as a *preparation* for the *Sacrament*, which indeed is the properest *Instrument* to advance your further degrees of Penitence. There you will find *considerations* and *helps* for the *cooling* of the *heats* of your *passion*, and for the allaying the *boilings* of your *rage* and *animosity*. I say, if you are convinced in your Conscience, that your *wrath* is *undeserved*, you ought to repent, and if you *do so*, you ought to use the *Holy Sacrament* for the *confirmation* and *heightning* of your *Repentance*.

So that the scruple of not being in *charity*, cannot justly keep any from the *Sacrament*, but *those* that know they hate their Brother without a *Cause*, and are resolved to persist in that hatred; such as will not be reconciled to one that hath done them wrong, though he repents, and endeavours reparation. And *such*, in effect, *renounce* Christ, and declare that they

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expect no benefit from his *Merit*, or *Mediation*, for the obtaining *Pardon* for themselves. If this be your condition, you may well be *afraid* to come to the Holy Sacrament, and you may as well tremble to pray, *Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us*. For this is directly praying against your selves. I hope it is not thus with any of you that make this exception.

But your Neighbour you think is an evil man, hath done you *injury*, and not ask you *pardon*, or sought your *amends*, you are therefore much displeased, and feel great anger in your mind against him, but yet are very *ready* to *forgive* upon his acknowledgments and desire of *forgiveness*. If it be after *this manner* with you, you ought not to *abstain* from the *Sacrament* for *this* reason; but rather to address your selves to it, to *provide* and *pray* that your *just anger* may not grow into *malice* and *rage*; that you may not be provoked to repay your Enemy one injury for another; but that by the due use of those holy

## An Earnest Invitation

holy Myſteries you may be more inclined to *forgiveness*, when he ſhall be fit for it. This I think is *ſufficient* for that *Doubt*.

( 11 ) *But I have ſo much buſineſs fallen upon me, that I have not time to prepare my ſelf, and therefore I cannot come.*

In *anſwer* to this, I ſhall ſay ſomething that concerns, 1. *Buſineſs*; and ſomething 2ly. that concerns *Preparation*.

( 1 ) As to *Buſineſs*. Doth your *Buſineſs* afford you time to eat, and drink, and ſleep, and none to fit your Souls for ſpiritual entertainments and conſe with God ?

( 2 ) Have you any greater, have you any better buſineſs, than to prepare your ſelves to remember the Love of your dear Lord, to meet with him, to renew your Covenant with God, and to receive pledges of his pardon and his love ? Do you not reckon that this is *Buſineſs*, and the moſt important and neceſſary buſineſs; and

ſhall

shall the greater matters give place to the less?

(3) Is not much of the Business that hinders, needless? Have you not voluntarily involv'd your self in more affairs than it was necessary you should, or than your state or station in the world requir'd? Might not some of it have been put off to some other time; or might not the time that you spend in *impertinencies* be employed in some of that business?

Ask your Consciences these questions; and know that what ever Business you take upon you *more* than is consistent with your Duty to God, and to your Souls, *that Business is your sin*. But if your *business* were not *voluntary* but thrown on you by *providence*, the *doing such necessary Business is Gods work*; and while you do it in his fear; and with an eye to his *glory*, you are doing somewhat that is a *preparation* for the Holy Sacrament, or at least *that which doth not by any means indispose* you for it. And hence I pass to the Answers that concern,

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II. Pres

II. Preparation. As to this take these two things.

(1) There are *Preparations* required to *Prayer* and *Hearing*, as well as to the *Sacrament*; *Meditation* is the Preparation for *Prayer*, and *Prayer* the Preparation for *Hearing*; and I hope that notwithstanding your busyness you perform *these* Duties: If not, you are to repent speedily of your neglect, and to take the *first* opportunity of the *Sacrament*, there to confess your sin, to declare your repentance and resolutions of amendment; to beg pardon for what you have omitted, and Grace to assist you in what you resolve. But if you have perform'd those holy services, then I say,

(2) That those Performances joyned with Faith and Repentance, are preparations for the Holy Communion. For when we hear, and when we pray, we do the same thing that we do at the *Sacrament*, though not with that solemnity; we remember Christ when we hear, and we do the same, and renew our Covenant with God, when we pray

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(in which two I have told you the nature of the Ordinance consists ; ) so that these *acts* are *dispositions* and *preparations* for *that* which is the more solemn Performance. A good life in the discharge of our duties towards God and Man, is an *habitual* and *constant* preparation for the Sacrament ; and a true Christian is always ready and prepared to remember Christ, and to confirm the Covenant whereby he is a Christian. It is indeed very fit, that we should take some time before we approach the Lords Table, to call together into our thoughts the several great Instances of the love of our dear Saviour, which we are to remember there : What particular sins we have to confess, and to resolve and covenant against ; what Graces we want, and are more especially to implore. These things we should do, but they are not works that will require much labour or time, if we have been constant in the other preparatory Duties of Meditation, Prayer, and Hearing ; for they do habituate such thoughts and resoluti-

ons to the Souls of good Men. But if thy case be *such* that thou hast been an *evil* Man, and *negligent* of all spiritual duty; but art now *sensible* of thy sin, and *desirous* to reform ; *that sense* and *those desires* of amendment (if they are *sincere*, and if thou understandest the *nature* of the *Sacrament*, and Gods *Covenant* that is sealed by it) are thy *preparations*. The *more time* thou takest, and the *more Prayers* and *Thoughts* thou employest with other means, to make the *sense* of sin *deep*, and the *desires* of Reformation *intense* and *great*, the *more* thou art *prepared*, and the better things are like to succeed with thee. But if thy *preparations* are of a lower, and more imperfect degree (if of the *true* kind) thou oughtest *not* therefore to *abstain* ; God will *pardon* thy *infirmities*, and *accept* of thy *sincerity*, and *strengthen* thee *so*, that thou shalt be *better prepared* against another opportunity, if thou art not wanting to thy self. But as to this, I may have occasion to speak more under the next Head, viz.

(II.) To

(II.) To consider the *Scruples* of Conscience, that keep some off wholly from publick Communion. They are either of such as refrain, because (1) they think *themselves unworthy*, or (2) of those that do it, because they think *others unworthy*, (3) of such as refuse on the opinion, that the way of administration is *unworthy*. Most of the considerable and usual doubts will fall under one or other of *these*. I begin with those of the *first* sort.

(1) We would come to the Holy Communion, but alas we are not *worthy* of so great an honour and privilege; and we are afraid to come, because we hear, that *he that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks his own damnation*.

To this, proposed thus in the general, I answer, (1) We are also *unworthy* of common Mercies, of *Meat*, and *Drink*, and *Raiment*; and of the more usual *spiritual* Mercies, that God should *speak* unto us, or that we should be permitted to *speak* unto him; shall we therefore *starve* our selves, and go

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*naked* ? shall we therefore refuse to hear and pray ? In the *Sacrament* there is *something of Duty*, and *something of Priviledge* ; when we are commanded to do a duty *reasonable and just*, shall we refuse because we are *unworthy* ? When we are invited unto a Benefit *great and free, and necessary*, shall we resist it because we are not *worthy* ? To do this is to tender our selves *more undeserving*. When God offers Favours, we *may* and *ought* to accept, though we are unworthy of them.

(2) All men are unworthy in the sense of the Law. *Every man in his best estate is altogether vanity*, Psalm 39. 5. *We are all an unclean thing, and our righteousness is as filthy Rags*, Isa. 64. 6. The meaning is, all men are Sinners, and their best Services are imperfect and polluted. There is none *righteous*, no not one, according to the strictness and severity of the Law, which requires unfinning obedience. This *unworthiness* then is not a reason why thou shouldst refrain ; yea,

(3) If

(3) If thou art *sensible* of this thine *unworthiness*, and desirous to be made *more worthy*, thou oughtest for *that reason* to come. 'Tis *such* that Christ invites: Come unto me all ye that are *weary and heavy laden*, and I will give you rest, Matth. 11. 28. He came not to call the *righteous*, but *sinners* to repentance, Mat. 9. 19. Ho every man that *thirsteth* come—Isa. 55. 1. The Spirit and the Bride say come, and let him that is *athirst* come.—Rev. 22. 17. Sense of spiritual wants. and desire of spiritual supplies, is part of Gospel *worthiness*; and that which gives a *right* to the Sacrament. Thy being an *unworthy* Sinner, is not a reason why thou shouldst refrain, except thou art *obstinately resolv'd* to continue so. The Beggar is never the more *unworthy* of an *Alms*, because he is in *rags* and great *misery*; nor the *sick man* the more *unworthy* of the *care* and *pains* of a *Physician*, because his disease is *great* and *violent* upon him. If indeed the Beggar loves and chuseth *want*, and scorns *charity*; if the patient hates and *resists* the *Physitian* and his *applications*; in

such a case the one is unworthy of relief, and the other of the means of health. If this be thy case in *Spirituals*, thou art *unworthy*; and till thou art of another temper, I would not persuade thy coming. But if on the other hand, thou art *sensible* of thy *sins*, and *desirous* of *pardon* and *grace* to reform, thou hast the *qualification* that renders thee one that *may* and *ought* to come: And thou art *worthy* as a *Beggar* is of an *alms*, or the *Sick* of *Physick*: That is, thou wantest it, and Christ invites thee to come, and to receive *supplies* suitable to thy wants. So that if it be *thus* with thee, the sentence of the Apostle pronounced on him that *eats and drinks unworthily* will not concern thee.

But the Doubter presseth the matter more particularly *Knowledge*, *Faith*, and *Repentance* are *necessary* to this *worthiness*. But I have *no knowledge*, I *cannot believe*, I *cannot repent*; and therefore *am not worthy*.]

I shall speak to these *distinctly* and *apart*.

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As to what concerns, (1) Knowledge, I propose *these* things.

(1) Perhaps thou art mistaken in the *Degrees of Knowledge* that are necessary. It is *not necessary* thou shouldst have knowledge in *deep and controversial Points*; no, nor yet in many *doctrinal Opinions* about Religion, that are *less speculative and nice*: It is not necessary that thou shouldst be acquainted with the *disputed* matters about the Sacrament, or be able to discourse largely upon the Subject. No, *Necessary knowledge is in few things, and those practical*. If therefore thou art instructed in the main *plain Points of Christian Doctrine*, and in the *great Rules of Christian Life*; if thou understandest the Sacrament to be a *Remembrance of Christ*, and a *confirming our Covenant with God*; and knowest those *easy* things I have before set down about it: There is no reason then why thou shouldst plead *ignorance* in barr to thy *Duty and Privilege*.

But,

(2) If thou art *really ignorant* in those plain things, thy ignorance is inexcusable; 'tis a great *Sin*, and an argument of *prodigious carelessness* and *neglect*. For no one can *want capacity* to know things so easie, and no one can want opportunity to know things so *common*, and no one can plead excuse for not endeavouring to know things so *necessary*. If *this* then be thy case, repent of thy stupidity and carelessness that occasioned thy ignorance, and apply thy self presently to thy *Spiritual Guide*, or some honest knowing neighbour, to instruct thee in those great and necessary matters. Be afraid and ashamed to live a day longer in such dangerous darkness amidst so much clear Light: And till thou hast got out of this state of wilful blindness, meddle not with Holy Mysteries. But *this*, I hope, is the condition but of very few of you: Those that make the Objection, are mostly such as do it upon the *former* mistake,



mistake, which I have endeavoured to rectifie.

(II) Want of Faith is pleaded. And to this scruple I say,

(1) Perhaps thou art *out*, and hast been *mist* taught in the Doctrine of Faith. It may be thou takest Faith to be an *assurance* of Salvation; or supposest that it requires thy assent to many Principles, and such as are *unreasonable* or *doubtful*; or perhaps thy mind hath been *confounded* by *phrases*, and *various*, *metaphorical*, and *dark* representations of Faith; so that thou dost not so much as know *what it is*, or *wherein it consists*. These all have been, and often are the cases of many well-disposed Christians. The good man is not absolutely *assured* of his Salvation; or he *doubts* sometimes of many *Doctrines* and *Opinions* that he hath been taught to believe as *Fundamentals*; or his understanding is *confused* by variety of *odd notions*, and therefore he thinks he hath not Faith, and dares not approach the *Holy Table*. If any of these be thy condition, rectifie thy thoughts, and

and thou wilt be rid of thy vain fears: Consider the matter *freely*; look on it in the *Light of Scripture and Reason*, and thou wilt find, that *those conceits about Faith were groundless*. Lay this down for certain, That the *plainest and most obvious account of it is truest*; For God would not make *that* the great condition of the Gospel, which is *difficult* to understand.

Now the *plain, scriptural, rational* Notion is *this*, Faith in the general is the *belief of a Proposition affirmed*; *Divine Faith*, the belief of something upon a *Divine Testimony*; Gospel saving Faith is such a *belief of Divine Testimony*, as hath influence upon the *heart and practice*, and confirms them unto it. If now we believe other *Testimonies*, but not *that* which God hath given us *by*, and of his *Son*, our Faith is *merely humane*, and we have nothing to do with the *Holy Sacrament*. If we *believe* the Revelations of God in the Gospel, but *that belief* hath not yet had such power upon our *affections and conversations* as it ought, and as we  
desire

desire: In *this* case we *may*, and 'tis our duty to come to the Lords Table, to profess *that degree of Faith* which we have, and to pray for more; that it may be made *so strong and lively*, as to transform our hearts, and all our powers into the *likeness* of it, and into *his likeness* who is the *Author and Finisher of our Faith*. And finally, if our faith hath *already* had *this effect* upon us, we are to come to the *Sacrament* for further *confirmation* of it. This is the short and plain account of the matter, and if I should run it out into further discourse, this part would be disproportioned to the rest. If my brevity leave any of you unsatisfied in *this*, or any other things belonging to my Subject, I am at hand, willing and ready to give you further satisfaction. But,

(2) It may be the *weakness and imperfection* of thy Faith makes thee think thou hast *none*. In this case ask thy self the question: Do I think that *Christ Jesus* was an *Impostor*, and that the *Gospel* is a *Fable*? Thou  
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*startle*st and *abhorre*st these thoughts: Hence thou mayst be assur'd that thou hast *some degree* of Faith. But *that* (it may be) is very *small* and *low*: Be *that* the case; ask thy self then again, whether thou hast any *desire* that thy *weak* Faith should be *strengthened*, and thy *imperfect* Faith should be *improved* to greater and nobler measures? If thou art a person fit to be dealt with under this Head of *Conscience*, it is *thus* with thee; thou art *sorry* for *this imperfection*, and *desirous* of *growth* and *improvement*: And if so, apply thy self to the *Holy Sacrament*, as to the *proper means* of *growth*, and *remedy* of thy *imperfections*. Here thy Faith will be *exercised*, and by exercise it will be felt; so that thy doubts will be cleared: Experience will assure thee. And how thy Faith will by the use of this Ordinance, be quickned and advanced, I have shewn already. Thus to the Objection from the supposed want of Faith. But,

(III) The

(III) The good man thinks that he wants *Repentance* too: He cannot *repent* he saith, and therefore is not worthy. In answer, I take notice that,

In *Repentance* two things are considerable, viz. 1. *Sorrow* for sin, and 2. *Turning* from it to a life of Holiness and Virtue.

1. It may be thy *Sorrow* is not so *intense* and *great* as thou thinkest is fit and suitable to such an occasion: Thou canst not weep and grieve *so much* for thy sin as the evils of it require; and yet thou mayest not wholly want the Grace of *Repentance*. All indeed are *Sinners*, and all must *repent*: But Men are *Sinners* in *different* measures and degrees of guilt; and their sorrow and humiliations will likewise be *different*. *Deeper* *Convictions* and *greater* *Agonies* and *Pangs* of *Sorrow* may be expected from them whose Sins have been *capital* and *notorious*, than from those others whose lives have been more *civil*, and less tainted with *ranting* *Enormi-*

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Enormities. It may be then thy Education hath been sober, and thy Inclinations not bent towards the groffer Vices; thou hast not committed any *horrid Crimes*, or *such sins* as look *Ghastly* in thy Conscience; and consequently thy Conversion hath not those *terrors*, and that *dread* in it, those melting Sorrows, and violent expressions of Grief that thou observest in some others. Though it be *thus*, thou hast no reason to be discouraged, if thy Sorrow be *so much* as to engage thee to *humble* thy self before God, sincerely to beg *grace* and *forgiveness*, and to obtain from thee *hated* of thy sins, and resolutions against them; that *sorrow* of thine is *Godly sorrow*, and part of true *repentance*, though it have not the greatest degrees of *vehemence*: these may be wanting on another account also in them that are truly Penitent; their *temper* may be more *cold*, and their *passions calmer* than others are; and on this score their *resentments* less notable, and the expressions of them less eager.

eager : So that *violences in sorrow* are not always arguments of *true repentance*, nor the absence of them a sign of *impenitency and hardness*. If thou art so sensible of sin as to desire and endeavour to overcome and forsake it, thou art a *Penitent* in part, and thou oughtest to come to the Sacrament for the strengthening of that sense, and to gain more assistance and more resolution to subdue thy sin. And if there be any real *defect* in thy sorrow, repair thither, that it may be awakened, and excited to degrees more becoming, and effective.

But (2) The Objection presseth as to the other part of *Repentance*, *I cannot leave my sin*, and therefore dare not approach the *Holy Mystery*. But dost thou *desire* it? dost thou *endeavour* it? If so, though thy desires are imperfect, and thy endeavours weak, yet it is thy duty to present thy self at the *Holy Table*. There thou mayst expect to have thy *Desires increast*, and thy *Endeavours heightened and encouraged*. And how both the former  
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act of *Repentance*, which is *Sorrow*, and *this* of *Aversation*, are promoted by the *Sacrament*. I have particularly shewn in the former Periods, to which I refer you for your fuller Answer to this and such like Objections.

Thus of the Scruples that arise from the first Head, the apprehension of our own *unworthiness*. I descend to another.

(11) Some abstain from the *Sacrament* because of the *Unworthiness* of *Others*; *wicked men* are admitted, and they will not have *communion* with *such*. Yea, they are commanded to have no *fellowship* with them, *Eph. 5. 11.* and to *come out from among them*, *2 Cor. 6. 17.*

For the answering this, I propose these things to be considered.

(1) Hast thou taken the *Method* of our *Saviour*, *Matth. 18. 15.* with the *Sinner*, from whose communion thou thinkest thou must withdraw? Hast thou *privately* told him of his *Faults*? Hast thou *admonisht* him before *Witnesses*? Hast thou told the *Church*?



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*Church*? If so, thou hast done, and he persist still in his wickedness, he will no doubt be *legally* excluded from *Christian Communion*; and so the foundation of thy doubt will be taken off.

(2) How art thou *sure*, when thou seest those thou callest *wicked* come to the *Sacrament*, that they do not *repent* of their wickedness, and come to the holy Ordinance to *beg pardon* for their sins, and *strength* against them? How dost thou know that they are not come to *bind* themselves by deep resolutions, and sacred vows, to a *spiritual warfare*, and a new *obedience*? Their coming makes *Profession* of *such designs* and *resolutions*, and how dost thou know that *that Profession* is *insincere*? Hast thou a way of prying into the Heart?

But the man returns to his sins as soon as he hath done, and hence thou wilt say, thou knowest his *Hypocrisie*. This indeed were something, if it could be certainly *foreseen*; but how he will demean himself after the *Sacrament*, thou canst not *foretel*; This may have

have more effect upon him than *former Sacraments* have had. This I say, may be, and *Charity thinketh no evil, but believeth all things, hopeth all things,* 1 Cor. 13. Or, if it now again prove otherwise, it is no certain evidence that the Man *only made pretence* and shew; he might then *mean and design truly, and well;* but temptations and his *lusts* were too strong for him, and carried him away against all his *endeavours and resolutions.*

(3) Thou performest other sacred duties, in which thou *rememberest Christ,* and hast *Communion with God,* in the *company of evil Men.* Thou joynest in *hearing, and publick Prayers* with *such;* and why mayest thou not be *present at the Sacrament* with them?

If it be pretended as a *reason of difference,* That *hearing the Word,* and *Prayer,* are *converting Ordinances,* but the *Sacrament* is not so: I ask thee then, whether thou meanest by [*converting*] a *turning Men from open Infidelity to the Profession of the Christi-*

an Faith, and the owning of Christi-  
an Virtues ? or only the turning those  
that profess this Faith and Religion be-  
fore, to the practice of them ? If thou  
intendest the former, the Sacrament  
indeed is no converting Ordinance ;  
nor are the Word and Prayer ordi-  
narily used for such purposes among  
us, where the Gospel is already ge-  
nerally profest : And thou dost not  
bear the company of the wicked, of  
which we speak in the places of pub-  
lick worship, upon any such expecta-  
tion.

But if by *Converting* Ordinance,  
thou meanest (as is most likely) such  
a one as God useth as a means to cause  
men professing the Name of Christ  
to depart from iniquity, to turn from  
sin to holiness, and from the power of  
Satan unto God; I see no reason why  
any should think or say, that the  
Sacrament is no *Converting* Ordinance.

If it be not, either 'tis because the  
Sacrament is no proper means, or becaule  
God will not concur by his Grace with  
it. Neither of these can be said with  
any

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any shew of reason : Not the *former*, for why should not the *solemn remembrance of Christ*, and the *Consideration of what he hath done and suffered*, be a *means* for the *killing of sin*, which he came to *destroy*, and the promoting *holiness*, which he *lived and dyed* to *advance* ? yea, what can be supposed more *likely* and *powerful* for the promoting of *that blessed purpose* ? why should not the *sign and seal of God's gracious Covenant* to give *Pardon* and *eternal Glory* to all that forsake their sins, and live an *holy Life*, be a fit *Instrument* to provoke those that understand it, to *renounce* their *sins*, and to *devote* themselves unto *Holiness* ? why should not that *solemn, sacred engagement*, that all that know what they do lay on themselves at the *Sacrament*, to *endeavour to depart* from every *known evil*, and to *practice* every *known duty*, be a *means* to oblige them to it ? Certainly there is nothing that in the *nature of the thing*, seems to be a more *likely instrument* to convert men from a *life of sin*, to a *life of holiness* ;  
than

than the sacred *remembrance* of our Lord at his Table. So that if this *Ordinance* be not *converting*, it must be, because God will not *concur* by his *Grace* in it : But whoever saith *that*, speaks what he *cannot know*, and *cannot prove* ; he talks *without book*, and *against* it ; and is so extravagant in his Assertion, that it would be folly to attempt the confuting of him.

*This* I have said on this occasion , not to engage in a *Controversie*, but to clear a matter of *Christian practice*. And the very Root of this Objection lies in this conceit, That the *Sacrament* is not a *converting Ordinance* ; For which there is *nothing* but *Fancy*, and the *bare sayings* of some *mistaken men*. But now, if as I have proved, the *Sacrament* may be, and is an *Instrument* to *Conversion* ; then, why should any refrain, because evil men are admitted to it ?

(4) If wicked men come to the *Sacrament* that are not *prepared* for it, their *unpreparedness* is *their sin*, and they shall answer for it : But we ought not  
there-

*therefore to neglect our duty, because they have omitted theirs. We may, and we ought to advise, and admonish them to prepare themselves for the Ordinance before they come to it: If they will not follow our brotherly admonition, we cannot help it; we have done what we can to render them more worthy, and their sin shall not be laid to our charge. To prepare our selves for the Holy Communion, and to address our selves unto it, is that which we are sure concerns us; If we neglect, 'tis our sin, and other mens sins will not excuse us. Their sinning in one kind should be no reason why we should sin in another. There is no reason that we should starve our selves, because others take the bread that belongs not to them.*

(5) *If we are worthy Communicants, and others receive unworthily, They have no Communion with us, nor we with them: They only eat bread, and drink wine; but we partake of the mystical body and blood of our Lord. Our Communion is with the Father, and*  
with

with his Son Jesus Christ, and with the Faithful, worthy Receivers; but the unworthy partake neither with *us* nor *them*. If an *Ape* leap upon the Table, and eat of the bread where Friends are met at entertainment, Is he therefore a Guest? Is he one of the Company? If writings are to be mutually sealed there among the Friends, and that Creature catcheth up the Seal, and doth as the Covenanters do, is he therefore a party? He doth the same *action*, but not with the same *designs* and *ends*; and *these* make the *Communion*. The case is thus in reference to those ungodly men that *intrude* to the Sacrament; and the pious Communicants have no reason to think themselves concern'd in their company. Their *bodies* are together, but their *spirits* act and move *different* ways. The *Communion* is *spiritual*; and only those that receive as they *ought* have *fellowship* with *Christ*, and with one another. And this were enough to answer *that* Part of the Objection also that is taken from the *Scripture*,  
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where we are forbid to have *fellowship* with wicked men. But I add,

(6) When Christians are prohibited wicked *Fellowship*, *Ephes. 5. 11.* It is evident that the prohibition concerns *Heathen mysteries*, which are there call'd the *unfruitful works of darkness*, because they were used in close recesses; and *vers. 12.* The Apostle saith, *It is a shame to speak of those things that are done of them in secret.* Christians were not to *communicate* with the *Heathens* in their *abominable Mysteries*: No, nor may they partake with wicked men in any *action of vice*, nor make them their *bosome friends*, nor be concerned with them in *other matters* more than needs; especially if they are *openly prophane*, and *obstinately ungodly*. But it doth not therefore follow, that they must forsake their *Lords Table*, and the most solemn expressions of duty to him, because evil men *intrudingly* present themselves unto it.

And



And whereas Christians are commanded to *come out from among them,* and to *be separate,* 2 Cor 6. 17. 'Tis plain, that the persons they are required to separate from were *Heathens* and *Idolaters*: For they are called *Unbelievers*; vers. 14. *Infidels,* vers. 15. And that they were *Idolaters,* is intimated, vers. 16. *What agreement hath the Temple of God with Idols?* Whence it follows, *Wherefore come out from amongst them.* So that this place doth not concern the present business; Christians were to *separate* from the Worship of *Heathen Idolaters,* but it doth by no means follow hence that they must forsake the true *Christian* Worship, because *evil Men* (who yet profess Christ) afford their presence at it.

And this may suffice for Answer to the Objections taken from the *unworthiness* of others that are admitted in *mixt* Communions.



Lastly, The *unworthiness* of our *Way of Administration* is pretended by some, as a reason why they cannot communicate with us. I shall only speak briefly to two Exceptions of this sort.

(1) The *Sacrament* is administered among us in the way of *Forms* of *Prayer*, which they think to be contrary to *spiritual* Worship. And (2) *kneeling* at it is required, which they suppose to be contrary to the first *Example*; and so an irregular posture of receiving.

To the *first*, I say these things, (1) Worship and Prayer may be *spiritual*, where *Forms* are used : For the *spirituality* doth not consist in the *invention* of words, but in the due *intention* and *ingagement* of the Soul. If we pray in *faith*, with *humility*, *self-resignation*, and *holy desire* of the good things we pray for, we pray in the *spirit* though by a *Form*. And if on the other hand, we express our selves by *conceived Prayers* never so *fluently* and *earnestly*, and have not those dispositions  
of

of Soul upon us when we pray, our prayers are *formal*, though without a *form*. Which of these is *fittest* in it self, I shall not dispute, but only say, that *neither* is unlawful, but *both* have their use; and add, that *one* sort may be *properest* at *one* time, and the *other* sort at *another* season; so that 'tis silly *superstition* to be devoted to the opinion of *one* of them, as absolutely to condemn the *other* as *unlawful*. In publick *Worship*, *Forms* have the advantage in securing the *gravity* and solemnity of it, and in *this* too, that the Worshippers *know* what it is they joyn in: But in *secret* devotions, *conceiv'd* Prayers may sometimes suit better with particular occasions, and may engage the affections *more*. So that either of these may be used, as shall best accord with the ends of Prayer. And when the publick *Authority* of the Church requires the one, we may not *scruple* it, though we are more *affected* with the *other*; especially, since we may in *private* take the liberty to use which of them we think fit-

test. (2) *Those* that are most *against* *Forms*, pray *by them*, when they join with another that prays, though he do it never so much *ex tempore* : For the Peoples Minds are not concern'd in *inventing* the words they pray by; the Minister gives a *Form* to them. And if you *may* pray in the *form* of a *private* person dictated to you *suddenly*, and without *deliberation*, and which you do not know before, whether it will agree with *good sence* or *sound Doctrine*; why then may you not do it in the *forms* of the *Church*, compos'd by *wise* and *reverend* persons upon *mature consideration* and *advice*; especially when they are *such* as we *do*, or *may* know *before* to be *pious* and *grave*, suitable to *Christian Necessities*, and *Christian Truths*? There is no good reason that I know to make a scruple of the *latter*, if we admit the *former*.

(II.) *Kneeling* at the *Sacrament* is not agreeable to the *first Example*; our Saviour administer'd to his Disciples *sitting*; and perhaps you fear  
there

there is something of *Popery* in the posture of *Kneeling*.

I answer (1) we are not bound to a nice and punctual observance of all the *Circumstances* that were in the *Primitive Example* : The Sacrament was first administred in the *Evening* in an *upper room*, only to twelve persons, and those *Men*, and *Ecclesiasticks*, or at least such as were *destined* to be so: But even the Objectors do not think we are obliged to act in the Sacrament strictly after the Example of these Particulars : and why should we suppose our selves to be tyed in the matter of *posture*, more than in those other *Circumstances*, which we acknowledge to be of no binding nature ? (2) The *posture* of those times at meals was not *sitting*, but *leaning*, according to the *then Custom* of the *Romans*. So we read *John* 21. 20. That the beloved Disciple *leaned on his masters breast at Supper*. And though the *English Translation* renders, *Luke* 22. 14. *He sat down*, and the Disciples with him ; it is in conformity to our *phrase*

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and *custom*, which is *sitting* : for the word in the Original [*αἰτῆσις*] doth not imply *that posture*, but is applicable to *any other* that is used, as well as *sitting*. So that if we are *strictly* tyed to the *original posture*, we must *lean* at the Sacrament, and neither *sit* nor *kneel*. But (3) the Institution hath not bound us to either the one or the other, but left the matter to be determined by the *general Rules of Decency and Reverence*. And since the *Fathers of the Church* have commanded *kneeling*, as the posture most expressive of our *Humility and Reverence* in receiving the pledges of *Divine Love*, I see no reason why any should boggle at it ; much less why they should refuse their Duty, and their Privilege, abstain from their spiritual food, and the solemn remembrance of their dear Lord, rather than do a thing so *innocent*, so *decent*, and so *reverend*, which the Authority of the Church requires from them. He hath but little appetite to his meat, that will not eat it

it except he may do it in such a fashion as is agreeable to his own humour.

I, but the Objector doubts, that there is real danger, and something of Popery in the case; the *Papists* use kneeling to signify their adoration of the *Host*, and the Scrupuler fears there may be some such thing in our practice. But this fear is very uncharitable and groundless, since our Church doth so vehemently and constantly declare against the Transubstantiation of the *Romanists*, and the adoration of any creature; and since we are always told, that kneeling is required for no other reason than to signify our Humility and Reverence: And though the *Papists* do express more by that posture, yet since our Church declares, that this is all she intends in reverence to the consecrated Elements, there is no ground why any should think more is meant by it. Kneeling signifies Reverence as well as Worship; and the declaration of the person himself is enough to shew

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*which* of them he *intends*. But besides, though the *Papists* adore the *Bread* as the real *Body of Christ*, and therefore kneel before it, yet *that* can be no reason why we should *not* in this remembrance of our Lord *adore himself*: They kneel to him as present *corporally*; we worship him as *virtually* and *spiritually* present.

This I might urge further as a positive Argument for the *posture* of *kneeling*, over and above the use of it, as an Answer to the Objection. Thus, all acknowledge that *Christ* is to be worshipp'd. *Receiving* the *Sacrament* is the *proper Worship* of *Christ*; and *kneeling* is a *proper* signification of *adoration*. It follows that on this account *kneeling* is *fit*, and *fittest* to be used in the action of Communion. But I shall pursue this matter no further, what I have said may satisfy the *modest* and *reasonable*; and people that are set and resolv'd in their Opinions, will not be satisfied with never so much more.

I should



I should now draw to an end, but I am loth to leave you without some particular *Rules of Preparation*; These I shall lay down plainly and briefly in the ensuing Periods.

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## C H A P. VII.

THE Persons that are to come to the Sacrament may be distinguished into two sorts, *viz.* Either such as do repent and are sorry for their Sins, but have not yet in any good degree prevailed over them; or, those other more improved and grown Christians, who in considerable measure have mastered their Sins, and are endowed with many habits of Holiness and Virtue. The first sort are yet under the Law, *viz.* A state of sense and conviction of sin, but have not attained to the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God, or the state of power over them. But the others have

have arrived to that power in competent measure, so that *sin* doth not reign in their *mortal bodies*, because they are not *under the Law*, but *under Grace*. For distinction sake, I call the first sort, **Bare Penitents**; the second, the **Faithful**. Now the *Preparations* that concern *these* are different as their states are.

I. For the *Bare Penitents*, and *Sorrowers* for Sin, I advise them to *prepare* by the *Rules* following.

(1) Endeavour to make your selves as *sensible* as you can of the *evil* of *sin*; Consider it as an *enemy* unto God, and to your own happiness; as the *basest ingratitude*, and the *greatest deformity*; as a thing to be *hated* for *it self*, if there were no consideration had to its *effects*: Look upon it as the *destroyer* of your *present*, as well as *future* peace and felicity; as the *enslaver* of your Souls to the *Devil*, and that which debaseth them to the *likeness* and *condition* of *beasts*.

Aggra-

Aggravate such • considerations in your thoughts by all the Circumstances that may render sin odious to you.

( 2 ) Consider the *gracious* nature of the *Covenant* that God hath made with us in his Son ; That by that *Covenant* he hath assured all true *Penitents* of *pardon* of their Sins, and *strength* against them. So that be our Sins never so *many*, or so *hainous*, they will be *forgiven*, if we *repent* and turn from them ; and be they never so *strong* and *violent* upon us, they may be overcome, if we accept and use the Grace that the Covenant offers to us. Represent these things duly, and frequently to your thoughts, and for the making the deeper impressions on them, collect those places of Scripture that speak so fully of the *Love* and *Mercies* of God, his *readiness* to *pardon*, and *desires* of our *happiness*, the *frequent* and *free offers* of his kindness ; His *invitations* to Sinners to  
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come unto him, and his often *bewailings* of their *obstinacy* and *hardness* in running from him : Consider that he sent his Son into the World to seek and to save *them that were lost*, to bring *Sinners to repentance*, to take away the *sins of the World*, to deliver us from the *wrath to come*, and that the *World through him might be saved* ; I say, draw together *such passages*, dwell upon them in thy Meditations, till thou hast *fill'd* thy Soul with them. And then thou wilt find great encouragement to seek for pardon, and wilt be supported against those faintings and despondencies ; that the meer sense of Sin, without a Saviour, might occasion in thy Soul.

(3) After this, summon up all thy *Resolutions* against thy Sins ; Consider thy *Baptismal Engagements*, how *just*, and *reasonable*, and *necessary* they were ; Resolve to *confirm* them by *new Vows*. Content not thy self with some *cold* and *indefinite* inten-

intentions of leading a new Life *some time or other*, but endeavour to settle in a *firm, unalterable* purpose of *fighting* against Sin, and *living* unto God. Do all thou canst by *Reason* and *Religion*, by the *Considerations* of *Duty* and of *Interest*, to fix thy Soul *here*. And then,

(4) Be *earnest* with God in *Prayer*, to give thee a fuller sight of Sin, and *clearer, surer* thoughts of *pardon-  
ing* Mercy : To *present* thee with more Arguments to heighten thy resolutions, and to make thy Soul *more* capable of being moved by them. I say, apply thy self unto God by *Prayer, publick, private* and *secret* Prayer, Confessing thy own vileness, acknowledging his Mercies, and resolving new obedience. And being thus prepared,

(5) Look on the Holy Sacrament as thy great *Duty* and *Remedy* ; As *that* to which God calls thee, and the state and necessities of thy Soul call thee ;

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thee; As that Ordinance in which thou art to seek and mayest expect pardon and strength, resolution and peace. Consider *this*, and raise thine appetite and expectations; for *they that hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled.*

And now when thou hast exercised thy self in *these acts*, and the time of the Holy Communion approacheth. Then,

(6) Imploy thy time in *awakening* and *affectionate* thoughts of Christ thy Lord. Consider the *greatness* of his *Condescension*, the *kindness* of his *Undertaking*, the *holiness* of his *Life*, the *purity* of his *Doctrine*, the *heaviness* of his *Sufferings*, the *power* of his *Resurrection*, and the *glory* of his *Ascension*. Turn thy thoughts earnestly, and often, upon *these* and *such* instances of the History of the holy Jesus, and by them dispose thy self to a befitting remembrance of him at his Table.

And

And (Lastly) Gather up all thy thoughts and resolutions together *viz.* thy apprehensions of thy *vileness* of sin, of the *Grace* of the *Covenant*, and the *merits* of thy *Lord*; thy *purposes* of leaving every evil way, and of renewing thy *baptismal Vows*, and say to thy self, Now is the time come that I must use *these* thoughts and resolves, that I may obtain pardon, and strength, victory over sin, and assurance of happiness: My Lord invites me to the great *representation* of the evil of sin in his own *sufferings*; to see his *Body* wounded, and his *Soul* made an *offering* for Sin, in the *Type* of *Bread* broken, and *Wine* poured out; To remember his *Conquest* over Sin by *Death*, and a glorious *Resurrection*; To see the *Covenant* of *Grace* and pardon *sealed*: He invites me to *these* privileges, and calls upon me to bind my self stronger in this holy *Covenant*, and thereby to make my self the subject of those blessings it assures and conveys. I say, imploy  
thy

thy Soul in such thoughts, and bring them with thee to the Lords Table; spread them before him ~~there~~ in humble Confessions, Supplications, and Acknowledgments, and thou mayest then expect to receive the benefit thou art seeking after.

*These are Preparations for a bare Penitent, that hath yet made but little progress in subduing of his Sins. And though the highest degrees of all these are not absolutely necessary to the coming of such to the Lords Table; yet the more they have been exercised in them, so much the better it is, by so much they are more prepared, and so much more they may expect of the benefits. But if your minds, that have not been used to spiritual things, will not fix long on such thoughts and Meditations: In-gage them, as far as you can; proceed in the Method prescribed with that diligence and care that becomes one that is serious. And then, though*  
your



your preparations be *imperfect* now, they may be *more compleat* against *another season*. If thou art sensible they have been so *defective*, maintain and keep up that sense, and resolve upon it, to endeavour to fit thy self better for *another Sacrament*, by renewing the *same method*, which will be *easier* for thee in the *progress* than it was in the *beginning*.

As for the other sort, *viz.*

II. *Those* that have *advanced* in the conquest of *their sins*; They are to act over all the former *Particulars*, that I have advised to the *bare Penitents*: For being yet *sinners*, and *imperfect*, they have need to use *that method*. And there are these few other *Directions* to be briefly added, that do further concern them.

(1) Call your selves to a *particular* account concerning your *Sins*, examining *what vices* you are most *addicted* to, and *what* are the *sins* of your *tempers*, or of your *Profession*

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*Confession and Calling* : When you have found *those*, exercise particular acts of *Repentance* upon them, and renew your resolutions against them. Consider, that allowance of them is inconsistent with *sincerity*, and a state of true *regeneration* ; that 'tis necessary you should oppose and subdue them, and that the holy *Sacrament* is to be used as a *means* for that blessed *end*.

(2.) Examine *what ground* you have got upon your *sins* since the last *Sacrament*, whether you are now more *tender* and *fearful* of offending God than you were *before* ; whether your *inclination* to any evil be more *weakened* and *mortified* ? If so, take encouragement hence to *go on* with more *Christian vigour* and *resolution*. If not, *humble* your selves for your *unfruitfulness*, and endeavour to dispose your Souls to make a *better use* of the *next opportunity*.

(3) Inquire

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(3) Inquire into the state of your Souls as to your *Graces*; *what Graces* are wanting, and *what* are *weak*? *which* are *growing*, and *which* at a *stand*? and when you have found the condition of your Souls as to *these*, then exercise you *meditations* upon *these Particulars* in the *Life, Doctrine,* and *Precepts* of your Lord, whom you are to remember at his Table, that may be *proper* for your *case*. Apply your thoughts, and cares, and resolutions that way. *Design* and *resolve* to attend the holy Sacrament for the *supply* of those *wants*, and to endeavour to use it *so*, that the *needed Graces* may be *obtain'd*, and the *weak ones* may be *strengthened*, that *those* that are at a *stay* may be put into *motion* forwards, and *those* that are *growing* may be *further improved*. If you thus provide, and imploy your selves in the method before remembred, you will then be meet partakers of the *holy mysteries*, and may assure your selves of the  *blessings* and *advantages* which they convey.

This

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**T**His Subject would have required a larger discourse, but my *present* business was principally with the *careless* and *negligent*, to whose condition I have mostly applied my self. For the *others*, that are solicitous for their Souls, and desirous to be further informed about this great and important affair of *preparation*, I shall advise them to get, and carefully to read and digest two excellent Books of the Sacrament: The former called *Mensa Mystica*, or a *Discourse concerning the Sacrament of the Lords Supper*, by Dr. *Simon Patrick*; and the latter named the **Christian Sacrifice**, containing most excellent *Meditations* and *Prayers*, both *before* and *after* the *Sacrament*.

In the *first design* of this little Discourse I intended to have added some things of that sort for your use; but while I was thinking of it, my Pious, Learned, and Excellent Friend the Author, sent me one of those his last Books, the *Devotion* and

## to the Lords Supper.

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and *Piety* of which is *extraordinary*; and there is nothing that I know fitter to prepare your *affections*, and to excite them to the noblest height of *desire* and *love*, than those *Heavenly Meditations*? And you cannot use more *proper judicious* or *affectionate Prayers*, than those he hath annexed. So that I was exceeding glad when I saw this useful, much needed work, so incomparably well done, that there was no occasion of my doing any more in it, than earnestly to recommend that Book to your perusal. And I intreat you to get it into your Houses, and from time to time to endeavour to warm your Souls by it, when you are preparing for the *Sacrament*, and by it to fix you in your *resolutions of living according to your engagements there*, when you have attended on that blessed Ordinance.

And now, my *Friends*, I leave you to the  *blessing of God*, and the consideration of what I have said. Whatever judgment may be made of it,

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I have this Testimony, that I *meant*  
it *sincerely*. And I shall never cease to  
pray, that both you and I may sin-  
cerely practice according to it.

Your faithful Monitor,

and Servant,



J. G.

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Postscript.



# Postscript.

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TO THE  
 Citizens  
 OF  
 BATH.

Christian Friends,

**B** *Esides the Writing of this Book  
 for your Use, I have taken what  
 Care I could, you should have it in your  
 F Hands;*

Hands ; and especially those of the poorer sort that cannot buy. I was extremely satisfied to perceive so good an Effect of those Endeavours at the last solemn time of Sacraments. Such Communion have not been here since our unhappy Troubles, that unhinged all : And now give me leave to ask you,

Did it not comfort your Hearts to see something like the former days of Charity and Peace ? Is it not a blessed sight to behold a full Assembly of Christians met with one accord, to Worship Christ their Lord ? Is not the Service more solemn, and are not our Hearts more raised ? Are not our Devotions kindled by the Zeal of others ; and our Spirits refresh'd by going to the House of God in Company ? Is it not joyful to see the mutual Amity of Christians express'd there ; and to joyn in full consent in remembring our dear Lord ; joyntly vowing our selves to his Service ; praising him for his Love, and waiting on him for his Blessings ? Is not this more like Religion and Worship, than the discour-



discouraging sight of a few, scatter'd here and there, when multitudes turn their backs upon this Feast of Divine Grace and Love? Is not this more comfortable than living in a stupid neglect of a great known Duty, and better than running into corners after fancies and unknown ways? Is not Religion more honour'd, and Peace more promoted, and Charity and Edification more advanced, by a joynt Worship of our Redeemer, than by Separations, and proud Singularities? Have not our Children and Servants a better Example in such a Practice? and are they not prepared for Reverence, and a careful sense of Religion, when they see full Congregations devoutly attending upon the Service of it? Will not the great reproach of the Reformation be taken away by our Unanimity in Worship; and the scandal of our coldness and want of zeal, that hath turn'd so many to the Church of Rome on the one hand, and to the Sects on the other, in great part be removed, and our Church better secured in

*these dangerous days from those Enemies on both sides?*

*To these things, Sirs, if you consider, you must consent, and I beseech you to weigh seriously the Benefits that will accrue to your selves and the publick weal of the Church and Kingdom, by an Accord in Worship. As you have begun in this, I hope you will hold on, and shew that it was not only a Fit of Devotion, or any by-consideration that induced you to it, but a conviction and sense of Duty.*

*I have represented to you the necessity of perseverance in Religion, and the dangers of Apostacy: They that endure to the end shall be saved, Mark 13. 13. But if any man draw back, God saith, His Soul hath no pleasure in him. 'Tis a terrible saying that of the Apostle, which I wish you well to consider; It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the Heavenly Gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the Powers of the World to come,*

come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance, *H. b.*

6. 4, 5, 6.

*You have now solemnly confirmed your Baptismal Engagements, and sacredly vowed your selves to Christ as his Servants and Subjects; whatever imperfection there was in those beginnings, take heed you do not account them as nothing: God doth not despise the day of small things, Zach. 4. 10. You are not to be discourag'd because you feel not any great Effects at first; the progress of the Grace of God, like the growth of Plants, is often by degrees, insensible; in continuance you will find the benefit, increase of your Graces and of your Comforts: But if you leave off what you have begun, you will grow worse and worse; more hardened in sin, and more averse to spiritual Duties; you will dishonour Religion, and the holy Sacrament, more by your Apostacy, than ever you did by your former neglects: You will offend and discourage others from trying those ways which you have attempted and left; and w<sup>o</sup> be to*

those by whom such Offences come.

*But, Sirs, I trust, you, having begun in the Spirit, will not thus end in the Flesh. You have solemnly profest your Belief in Christ, and adherence to him; hatred of your sins, and resolutions of new Obedience: And I hope you see no cause to alter your Minds: If not, in the Name and Fear of God, keep on in your Attendance on that Sacred Ordinance: Neglect no Opportunity of meeting your Lord, professing your love, and receiving Tokens of his. The Primitive Christians did at first every Week; and our frequency in the same Duty may contribute much to the restoring that Divine Spirit of Holiness, and Peace, and Love, that was so eminent among those Blessed Saints and Martyrs of Jesus. I wish you would afford me Occasion to deliver the Sacrament every Month (all the Year) as I do it during the Summer-season, for the sake of those pious Strangers that are willing to use spiritual, as well as natural means of health: And I should be very glad to meet more of you at such times.*

times. It would be no hindrance to your Affairs ; for God and Religion are never out of a Mans way. At his Table we seek, and may hope to find his Blessing; and this is necessary to the Concerns of this Life, as well as to those of the next.

And methinks every one that hath any sence of sin, and remorse for it, should rejoyce there is such a Remedy, and have frequent recourse to it. We fall into sin daily, and thereby wound our Consciences, and lay in matter for troubles and fears : This obligeth us to repeated Acts of Repentance, and the more serious and solemn it is, the more effectual it will be, and the more comfort and peace will arise from it.

Now in the holy Sacrament we solemnly profess, confirm, and exercise our Repentance, and receive there assurance of Pardon and Peace with God ; so that our own needs should urge us to frequent attendance on this sacred Duty, and to desire and earnestly to expect the returns of it.

This, as it would ease those that are oppressed by the burden of their sins, so

would it be an excellent preservative against it: For nothing tends more to the destruction of our sins, and growth of our Graces, than often to examine our selves, to renew our Resolutions, and to implore the Divine Aid and Help: And to these Exercises the holy Sacrament engageth us; and therefore this is one of the most effectual Instruments of Reformation, and an holy Life, that we can use.

Upon the whole, my Christian Friends, let us all repent and be heartily sorry that we have hitherto been so wanting to the great Duty, and to this Spiritual Interest; and resolve through the Grace and Strength of God, to express our unfeigned Repentance for our former neglects by our future diligence.

To assist your Devotions in it, I here annex some particular Prayers, which those that are not better provided, may use as there is need. These I thought very proper to be added, because I fear many perform this Duty in a cold, dead, customary

customary manner, for want of some such Help.

*And now I pray God to bless these poor Endeavours both to You and Me, and that we may be encouraged and excited by them to constancy in our Duty, and assisted by his Grace concurring with them to perform this solemn Worship with such Sincerity and Devotion, that his Name may be glorified, and our Souls comforted with the pardon of our Sins, and peace of Conscience here, and at length attain that everlasting peace and rest that remains for good men in the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus : To whom with the Father and Holy Spirit, be Praise and Adoration henceforth and for ever. Amen.*

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FORMS  
OF  
PRAYERS  
FOR THE  
LORD'S SUPPER.

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*A Prayer at Entrance, before the  
Holy Sacrament is begun.*

**M**ost gracious Father, Thou  
invitest me a vile Sinner,  
unworthy of the least Fa-  
vour, to a Spiritual Ban-  
quet, to a Feast of Love: Lord, I am  
come upon thy gracious call; being  
poor and needy, weary and heavy la-  
den under the burthen of my sins, I  
come

come unto thee, O Lord, for relief and rest : Help me to approach these holy Mysteries with fear and reverence, deep humility, and ardent devotion : with an Heart full of Faith and Love ; sensible of thy infinite Goodness in sending thy Son to dye for me ; and of his inexpressible Love in undertaking and accomplishing the work of my Redemption, truly sorry for my manifold sins, and thoroughly resolv'd against them ; and grant Holy Father, that hereby my Graces may be strengthened, and my Sins destroyed : That I may serve thee sincerely and acceptably all the days of this mortal Life, and in thy due time attain thy everlasting Kingdom, through the Merits and Mediation of Jesus Christ, my blessed Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

*A Prayer*

*A Prayer while others are Re-  
ceiving.*

**O** Lord, I praise thy Name that Thou art pleased to admit me to the Congregation of thy People, to be partaker of the Communion of Saints, and in that to enjoy Holy Fellowship with thy self, and a comfortable Earnest of that glorious, perfect, most happy Communion thou hast given us ground to hope for in thy Kingdom: Grant, gracious Lord, that I may thankfully and joyfully entertain this Privilege, and be disposed by it to Universal Charity and Love unfeigned to these thy People, and to all Christians. And Lord help these thy Guests worthily to receive this present Token of thy Love, and make them and me such in reality and truth as we are here in this solemn Profession, thy obedient and faithful Subjects. Let our hearts be knit to Thee and to each other, that  
we

we may henceforth live in unity and brotherly Love, forgiving one another, forbearing one another, as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us; being pitiful and courteous, ready to do good and to communicate; to distribute to the necessities of those that want, and prepared for every good work.: That Gods holy Name may be glorified, our Profession adorned, Christian People edified, and our Souls comforted with the Peace of God, and peace of Conscience here, and finally rewarded with the full enjoyment of the Love and holy communion of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*Another.*

**O** Lord, Thou God of Love, grant that as we thy Servants are here met in a joynt and solemn remembrance of thy Son our Lord, in obedience to his Commands and Holy Appointment; so all the Members

bers of thy Church may agree in the same common Profession of thy Name, and of thy Sons Religion; performing the great Duties, and participating the main Ordinances with *one accord*, in one heart and one mind, that our Divisions being cur'd and our Animosities laid aside, the Scandals occasion'd by them may be removed, Atheism and infidelity may be asham'd, all wickedness, *Spiritual* as well as *Carnal*, may be discountenanc'd, and true practical goodness advanced in the World: That Peace and Love, and all the blessed fruits of them, may abound, and true Religion in the power of it, may gloriously increafe; that the Professors of it may no longer contend about *Mint*, *Annise*, and *Cumin*, but heartily and sincerely mind the great things of the Law; and particularly the Law of Love, that *New Commandment*, that *we should love one another*: That we may return to the Primitive blessed temper of Holiness and Charity, and fre-

frequent Communion; that we may shew our Faith by our Works, and our Love by our Obedience; and not spend our zeal and strength in disputing, but ingage the vigour of our Affections and Resolutions in holy living, and hereby express our affectionate remembrance of Christ, and prepare our selves for that enjoyment of him, which we expect through the Merits and Mediation of that blessed Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

*A Prayer when the Minister  
draws near with the Elements.*

**B**lessed be thy Name, O Lord, that I was born in a Christian Land and admitted to thy Church by Baptism, and have lived to a capacity of sealing my Baptismal Vows in mine own person: Lord, I heartily take those Engagements upon my self; I renounce all sins, the works of the Devil, and worldly vanities

ties and sensual lusts : I heartily believe thy holy Religion, and sincerely profess, constantly to endeavour to obey thy Laws, and earnestly implore the assistance of thy Grace and Spirit to enable me to keep these Resolutions ; through Jesus Christ my Lord.  
*Amen.*

*A Prayer at the Receiving of the  
Bread.*

**L**ord, I receive this broken Bread, the representation of thy Body, in memory of thy wonderful Incarnation, and meritorious Sufferings, and vow by it, that I will by the Grace of God persist in the stedfast Faith of thy most excellent Religion, and sincere Obedience to thy most holy Laws, to my Lifes end. *Amen.*

*Another.*

**L**ord, I believe, help my unbelief. I take this Sign of thy Body as a Token of thy Love, and seal of thy Promises,

## Forms of Prayers

Promises, to obtain for me the Pardon of my Sins, and the Salvation of my Soul, upon the terms of Faith and new Obedience : Lord, I stand to my part of the Covenant, and in full assurance of Faith, I rely on thee for the accomplishment of thine : *Be it unto me according to thy word. Amen.*

*Another.*

**G**Rant, O Lord, that this Bread of Life, receiv'd by me in stedfast Faith and humble Thankfulness, may refresh and nourish my Soul, and be an effectual means of the growth of my Graces, and increase of my Comforts, till I come to Life Everlasting, through Jesus Christ my Lord. *Amen.*

*A Prayer at the Receiving of the Cup.*

**L**ord, I remember with all humility and gratitude the Effusion of thy precious Blood for me, and the  
Attone-



# for the Lords Supper. 131

Attonement, made by it: Grant me such a sense of those Sufferings as may awaken a due abhorrence of my sins, and such an apprehension of that Propitiation, as may encourage my addresses to the Throne of Mercy for pardon and peace; and quicken my Endeavours in the ways of Repentance and holy Living, till I obtain the Blessings thou hast purchased by thy Merits, and promised in thy Gospel.

*Amen.*

*Another.*

**V** *Hat manner of Love was this that while we were Enemies Christ dyed? Lord, make me deeply sensible of this astonishing goodness; and enable me to express my thankfulness by a constant and intire subjection unto Him, who hath bought me with the inestimable price of his most precious Blood, to whom be praise and adoration for ever and ever.*

*Amen.*

*Another.*

*Another.*

**L**ord, wash me from my sins through that Blood which I here commemorate; that being deliver'd from the terrors of guilt and wrath, I may *serve thee without fear, in righteousness and holiness all the days of my life,* according to the Precepts of thy Gospel, which thou hast enforced by thy holy Example, and sealed by thy meritorious Sufferings. *Amen.*

*A Prayer after receiving in Both Kinds.*

**A**LL Glory, and Praise, and Adoration be given to thee, O Lord, for all thy Benefits, especially for thy Son, for his Life and Death, Resurrection and Ascension; for his Doctrine and for his Example; for the appointment of this *Memorial Feast*; for thy gracious Invitation of poor Sinners to thy Table, and for thy admitting

mitting me the unworthiest of them to partake of thy Spiritual Dainties. Let me never forget this Love, or cease to remember this dear Lord; but carry the thoughts of him and it into all my affairs, that they may regulate and direct the actions of my life, to the promoting his Honour, and expressing my acknowledgments of his goodness: That so at last I may partake of his Glory, and enjoy the full manifestation of his love, through his Merits and Mediation, in his Heavenly and everlasting Kingdom. *Amen.*

*Another.*

**O** Lord, I have now once more, in confidence of thy gracious assistance, entred into a solemn resolution against my sins, to be more watchful over my ways, and to have more regards unto thy Laws. I most humbly and penitently implore thy pardon for my manifold breaches of such sacred Vows; those at Baptism,  
and

and others since at thy Table : And now earnestly beseech thee to afford me such measures of that Grace, which thy Son hath purchased and promised, as may be sufficient to strengthen my natural weakness, and to overcome my powerful temptations ; that I may serve thee acceptably, and faithfully, all the days of my life ; through Jesus Christ my Saviour. *Amen.*

*Another.*

**O** Lord, Thou hast sealed to me the Covenant of thy Grace made to me in and through thy Son, and assur'd me of the forgiveness of my Sins, the Power of thy Grace, the Light of thy Countenance, and the enjoyment of thy Love, upon the Conditions of Faith and Repentance. Lord, I most submissively praise thy Divine Majesty for this Grace, and wonderful condescension, in entering into Covenant with such a worthless Sinner ; I for ever love and adore thy  
blessed

blessed Son, my dear Saviour, for the Merits of his Life and Death, by which he hath satisfied thy Justice, and procured this gracious Covenant. Help me, O Lord, to abound more and more in acts of devout Praise and Holy Love; and to give constant heed to the diligent and sincere performance of those reasonable Conditions which thou hast required, and I have accepted, and engaged to fulfil: That I may obtain the effects of thy gracious Promises, through Jesus Christ my Lord. *Amen.*

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*F I N I S.*